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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

A FEW rather feeble efforts have been made to rouse the electorate from the apathy which Conservative Party organisers have seen as the greatest danger to their success. "Rowdyism" has been made much of —though this has been one of the quietest and least rowdy general elections ever held in this country. The only candidates who appear to have suffered considerably are the National Labour group, whose bids for Labour votes, on the grounds that they have restored prosperity, in poverty-stricken areas where unemployment is as bad as ever, have seemed an insult to thousands of disillusioned working-class people, many of whom voted for them out of personal loyalty in 1931. The only considerable effort at producing a "red letter" was the Tory leaflet which suggested that the Labour Party intended to confiscate privately owned houses and endanger Building Society deposits. Even Tory leaflets have to go through the hands of printers, and this one was successfully exposed in *Reynolds's* and in the *Daily Herald* before it was distributed.

The Building Society Scare

The flimsy basis for this housing scare was a passage in Mr. Mitchison's book *The First Workers' Government*. An extract was also quoted from a little known essay recently published by the New Fabian Research Bureau. The chief effect of the scare must have been to advertise these Socialist works, which were not in fact open to the interpretation put on them by the Tory leaflet and which were not in any case official statements of Labour policy. No responsible person could honestly believe that private houses would be confiscated if the Labour Party were returned to power, and the heads of the Building Societies, already troubled by the threat of a building slump in the near future, were naturally quick to reassure frightened householders about these imaginary dangers conjured up for political purposes. The real danger to security of tenure in many of the recently jerry-built areas is not that some day under Socialism the State will take over building and make Building Societies unnecessary—which need not upset tenants in any case—but that thousands of people who are living in houses they have not finished paying for will never be in a position to complete their purchases.

Italy's Protest

The Italian Note of protest against sanctions is the same old mixture of nonsense, hypocrisy and threats. We are told for the thousandth time that Italy's case has never been fairly considered at Geneva, that Italy is the one true champion of the Covenant, that the Abyssinian "menace" is being deliberately encouraged by our "unjust and arbitrary" measures. But it is significant that

Mussolini no longer affects to treat the League sanctions as a silly prank. They are an "act of hostility," he says, which calls for reprisals and which will have grave consequences. How then, he asks of each of the Governments to which the Note is addressed, do you mean to go about the business? The answer ought to leave him in no doubt: the sanctions are to be applied with all the rigour necessary to stop the war and uphold the principles of the Covenant. There have been two developments this week which will help to tighten the pressure on Italy. Austria has changed her mind and decided to join in the embargo on war materials to Italy. Germany will ban a number of exports to Italy, including foodstuffs, oil, iron, and raw materials of the textile and rubber industries. Coal—of which Italy gets her largest supplies from Germany—is not on this list; but it is already subject to export control, and it is understood that the Germans have no intention of obliging Italy by deliveries in excess of the normal.

Opinion in Italy

Meanwhile, as our correspondents in Italy inform us, public opinion is being moulded to meet the situation. Almost everybody one meets now talks the same language, quotes the same facts and figures, makes the same predictions. There is a widespread belief in the likelihood of "war with England." Italy's forces are supposed to be superior, and plans are ready for attacks on Malta, Egypt, Palestine, Cyprus, Aden and British Somaliland. The British fleet will be destroyed by devoted Fascist airmen, who will dive from the clouds in planes full of high explosive upon ship after ship and blow each (and themselves too) to smithereens. There are some, of course, who are not taken in by Fascist propaganda, particularly the Liberals and the industrialists. The former are few, mostly sprinkled in the bigger towns, and compelled to lie low. The financiers and industrialists, who count for more in the body politic, are in an unhappy plight, faced with currency restrictions, high taxes and low profits —and presumably worse to come. They have little belief in Fascism, except in so far as it is a bulwark against any "Red peril." But the Duce—who is Fascism—has, as they know, no natural affection for the business world, and no scruples about interfering with it if it seems expedient in the interest of the regime. If sanctions affect opinion in Italy, it is the bankers and industrialists who will kick first.

Government by Decree

There is a strong element of comedy about the use made by the Laval Government of the emergency powers conferred upon it by Parliament a few months ago. Most people in France were surprised when M. Laval used this authority to enact nearly two hundred *décrets lois* bearing upon the economic and financial crisis. But most of these earlier decrees had at any rate some relation to the crisis; whereas now, on the eve of the reassembly of Parliament, M. Laval has produced no fewer than 367 further *décrets lois* dealing with the widest imaginable range of subjects, and mostly without any special relevance to the existing economic situation. Every Ministry has brought out all the measures which have been on its files for years past, held up on account either of lack of parliamentary time or of the hostility of some party or vested interest; and all these have now been made law by one stroke of the pen. Parliament has, indeed, the right of rejection; but how can it possibly find time to go through this immense mass of emergency legislation? Clearly it cannot, though it may refer back a very few specially obnoxious measures. At the meeting of the Finance Committee of the Chamber on Tuesday, M. Laval argued strenuously in defence of his policy, and though he did not convince his adversaries, he appears to have gone some way towards conciliating them. No decisions were taken, and another meeting is to be held, at which some compromise may be found. There is no disposition, it seems, to turn the Government out immediately.

Armistice Day in Paris

The Laval of Tuesday was a different person from the Laval of Monday. The Armistice Day celebrations in Paris were an ugly affair, and the blame must rest on the Premier and his Minister of the Interior for permitting a parade of the most insolent and provocative of the Fascist bodies, the blueshirted "Solidarité Française." Their appearance in the Champs Elysées in the middle of the afternoon led to scenes of excitement and danger, which are graphically described by the *Manchester Guardian's* correspondent. In the angry struggles that took place, "one revolver shot," as he puts it, "might have blown up the powder magazine." What, we wonder, is M. Laval's game? Is he deliberately encouraging Fascist hooliganism in order to intimidate Parliament with the scare of civil war? And if so, can he control the sinister forces to which he is giving this licence? The growth of Fascism in France, both of the more "respectable" kind, as represented by the Croix de Feu, and the more disreputable—the Solidarité Française—is a portent, and warnings of a revolution in Paris cannot be dismissed as the idle talk of alarmists.

China for the Japanese

When Sir Frederick Leith-Ross set out a few weeks ago to help in the rehabilitation of China, we predicted that he would be faced with a difficult, if not an impossible, task. Japan has been even prompter than we expected in cramping his style. Suggestions of a loan to China by Great Britain or by any Western Power provoke vehement opposition in Tokio. The newspapers have vied with each other in misrepresenting British aims, and the Japanese War Office (the War Office, if you please!) has taken it upon itself to issue a communiqué on the matter. "Japan," it says, "cannot countenance the attempt of Great Britain to make semi-colonial China a financial protectorate of British capital." It is, of course, useless to argue with the Japanese. Their policy is clear and fixed. They have made no secret of their intentions, even though they may wrap them thinly, on occasion, in hypocritical language. China is a Japanese preserve; any assistance she may need will be provided by Japan; there is going to be no "open door" for the West—except of course for Westerners to get out by. The aggrandisement of Japan, so fatally encouraged by the blunders and cowardice of the League Powers in the Manchurian dispute, threatens, in the not distant future, disaster to half the world. But few, except the Russians, are yet fully alive to it.

Egypt and Britain

The rioting which broke out in Egypt on Tuesday followed immediately on the Wafd's withdrawal of its support from the Nessim Government. That support was at best tepid—based on the expectation, or hope, that Nessim Pasha would stand for the restoration of the 1923 Constitution. But it has been clear for some time that Nessim is no more inclined that way than are the British Government, and Nationalist discontent has been growing fast. Mahmud Pasha had already anticipated the Wafdi by coming out into open opposition. Sir Samuel Hoare's Guildhall speech, in which he decried the Constitution of 1923 as "unworkable," finally decided the Wafdist leaders. He protested, it is true, that Great Britain had no intention of preventing Egypt from having what the Egyptians really want. But the Nationalists read this, not without some excuse, as meaning that the Egyptians must always be taken to want what the British Government want. It is an awkward moment for us to embark on a new row with Egypt, and there will be profound disappointment, here as well as there, at the breakdown of what seemed a little while back a promising movement of Anglo-Egyptian co-operation. Egypt cannot be indefinitely denied her independence, and though the British Government may be right in saying that a full settlement cannot be reached to-day, they need not, and should not, give the impression that it is to be postponed till the Greek Kalends.

An Example of Economic Recovery

It was a curious coincidence that on Tuesday, while Mr. Baldwin was holding up the restoration of the steel industry as a telling example of the National Government's work for economic recovery, Lord Nuffield in another place was delivering a forcible attack on the steel-producers as a ring of inefficient monopolists sheltering behind a high tariff and penalising the progressive steel-consumers by selling them unsatisfactory products at an inconceivably high price. "We have to pay one-third more for steel than our friends across the Atlantic," said Lord Nuffield; "and yet we are asked to produce commercial vehicles cheaper than they." Lord Nuffield went on to refer to the steel employers as being "as dead as mutton," and to accuse them of "putting a 33⅓ per cent. tariff into their pockets." There are, in fact, two sides to the recovery of steel production, of which Mr. Baldwin, himself a "steel man," talks so big. With the aid of a high tariff our steel manufacturers have now secured a practical monopoly of the home market—reinforced by the recent agreement with the continental steel cartel for the quantitative limitation of imports. Naturally enough, steel output has increased; but the steel-finishing and steel-consuming trades maintain that the advantages of the producers of crude steel have been purchased mainly at their expense, that no real reorganisation of the industry has taken place, or is likely to take place, so long as the industry enjoys its present immunity from competition or coercion, and that the revival of exports is prejudiced by the high costs entailed upon the finishing trades by the maintenance of crude steel at an excessive price. A pretty instance of economic recovery under capitalism!

All MSS. and letters should be addressed to the Editor, at 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, London, W.C.1. The postage on this issue is: Inland, 1d.; Foreign, 1½d.; Canada, 1d.

LETTER FROM AN OLD TO A YOUNG TORY

MY DEAR BOY,—Heartiest congratulations on your victory on Thursday and many thanks for your letter. It is flattering for an old fellow who has reached the retiring age—there should be a compulsory retiring age for politicians as there is for Professors—to be asked by a promising young man like you for hints on entering Parliament. Being in the House is not an altogether satisfactory life—a wise man once said it was a place where you could "neither rest nor work." But the defects are on the surface; the real significance of Parliament as a means of government by avoiding trouble one only finds out after long experience. So I shall take you at your word and from time to time jot down any reflection that occurs to me.

I am glad you are going into a better balanced House than the last. The parliamentary system does not work with an 80 per cent. or 90 per cent. majority and, frankly, a lot of the young men who came in on the patriotic and economy vote in 1931 were not much of a credit to the Party or the country. The Parliamentary tradition is a thing that has to be learnt, and in 1931 there were too many newcomers to teach. There was a lot of talk about getting down to hard work; Committees were formed to study housing, the distressed areas, and all the rest of it, but they fizzled out very quickly. An automatic majority destroys the incentive to work. Fortunately things did not pan out so badly, because Baldwin ran the show, and he understands the tradition of English politics better than any other man alive. I dread the time when he retires—not that I think that will be very soon. He plays this pathetic card about being an old man and not lasting much longer (with a choke in the voice) almost as skilfully as Gladstone did. But I do not think that he will go on, as the G.O.M. did, until he is eighty-four. No one could accuse Baldwin of having Gladstone's "demonic energy." The truth is that he is lazy, and that is one reason why he is such a damned good Conservative Prime Minister. He is never excited or on the warpath. But you can rely on him for the soothing word at the right minute. He understands human nature just as he is reputed to understand pigs. It is all right so long as he is in charge. I have not the same confidence in all these fierce fellows who talk about the menace of Communism and bring out "red letters" and the rest of it. That sort of stuff is useful for an occasional election stunt, but it makes the Labour people wild and stirs up ideas that are better left alone. The way to stop all this class war is to get a tidy number (of course not too many) Trade Unionists and honest-to-God working men in the House. They soon settle down and cease to be any bother, and we can rely on them to keep the unemployed and the wild men in order for us.

If you want to understand how the thing works, read a fascinating book called *My Life of Revolt* by David Kirkwood—it is published by Harrap at 10*s.* 6*d.*, and is well worth the money. Kirkwood's father was a fine type of Scottish labourer who thought himself passing rich with a pound a week. Davie describes his father as a man of principle who every morning of his life went to great pains to be on the steps on the way to work before the hooter went. It was a matter of principle with him to

go to work of his own free will and not to be called there by any mechanical contrivance of the authorities. Of course this is really pride, not principle, and that is the key to David's own character. He became a shop steward in Beardmore's munition works in Glasgow during the war and as long as nobody interfered with him he went on saying that he was against the war, while all the time he was so proud of Beardmore's and the trust placed in him both by Sir William Beardmore and by the men that he spent himself in helping to produce as many munitions as possible. Then there was a row and Lloyd George went up to Glasgow and treated him and the men all wrong. L.G. has always been cleverer in fighting landlords than in managing working men. Kirkwood's pride was up and there were rows, and the military, who always make a mess of things, deported him to Edinburgh. He made such a fuss that they tried to buy him off by making him sign a mildly worded document about behaving well in the future. He would not sign anything and finally escaped to London to see Churchill, who, with all his faults—and he is a wild, dangerous fellow—understands the British tradition. When Kirkwood told him that he would accept nothing but reappointment at Beardmore's whether Beardmore's wanted him or not, Churchill laughed, but jumped to Davie's character. Kirkwood was reinstated and worked himself to the bone producing munitions until the end of the war. You could always manage him if you made a lot of him and did not let him see that you were managing him. Then he was elected with the other Clydesiders to the House of Commons, and came to Westminster, declaring, as he tells us, that they would soon "change all that." He knew all about what the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION calls "the aristocratic embrace" and determined from the beginning to show the big nobs that he was not to be put down or bamboozled. He started off by calling Baldwin "Uriah Heep" and then felt thoroughly ashamed of himself when Baldwin very gently asked him afterwards if that was how he really appeared to him. He hurled every abusive epithet that Parliament allows (and probably some that it does not) at Neville Chamberlain. He says that he meant to hurt Chamberlain, but Chamberlain came up to him afterwards and said he was afraid he must have said something to hurt Kirkwood. And then Davie gave notice that he was going to make a bitter attack on L.G., who promptly wrote him a note apologising for not being able to be in his place in the House when Mr. Kirkwood made his speech! Kirkwood, whose notion was that one knock deserved another, was flattened out by all this courtesy. And now he writes an autobiography with a nice introduction by his old friend, Mr. Churchill, and another by George Lansbury (to show that he is still a Socialist and a hundred per cent. Labour man), and a concluding chapter in which he says how much better things are for the poor than they used to be when he was a boy, and describes with proper pride a long conversation he had with the Prince of Wales at Lady Astor's.

That is how it is done in this country, and a jolly sight better way it is than all these concentration camps and beatings-up that we hear of on the Continent. There is an old taunt that the House of Commons is the best club in England. So it is, and it is a compliment. We could never get along if we did not stick to the rules of the game; there must be some give and take and courtesy in private, whatever we say in public. If you've called a man an agitator and sedition-monger in the House and he's called you a blood-sucker and battener-on-the-poor, you must have a drink with him afterwards or you might begin to believe what you've said. Actually you both find out you are not bad fellows and it's all forgotten. The personal touch is the salvation of this country and the safeguard against Socialism. Every now and again we get someone who is difficult to manage. Chamberlain might have been really dangerous if Gladstone had not driven him out of the Liberal Party, and L.G. came near to breaking up the whole show before the war. It is always your middle-class revolutionary who is difficult to handle. He is used to good manners, and is not affected by them. He knows they are only small change, and does not mistake them for real payment. That is why the Tories in the last House hated Stafford Cripps. He belongs to their class and he is a religious fellow who would be troublesome if he ever led the Labour Party. But they need not have worried. He had not enough political wisdom to compromise at the right times, and he has been very satisfactorily scotched by the Trade Unionists, who are only ready for trouble when attacks are made on the wages and conditions of the men they represent. The General Strike showed them that the middle-class are much too strong to yield to any direct attack, and though, of course, it is their business to shout defiance at Capitalism on the political platform they understand quite well that Trade Unions are part of the existing system and that it pays best to go slow and squeeze what they can out of the rich without upsetting things too much. As long as we can afford concessions it's all right. The fat will be in the fire, of course, if the time ever comes when we can't. I am no economist myself and hope some of my City friends who say a bigger depression is coming soon are wrong. But even the pessimists admit that rearmament will keep things prosperous for a bit.

Of course, Sir Stafford Cripps is quite right that with Parliament as it is to-day you can't do more than get concessions from the rich. It is only the Liberals who ever thought you could. Conservative thinkers have always known that Parliament represents various interests inside a community. It began like that when the King first sent for representatives of the various classes to come and assess their taxes. The House of Lords remains, I hope, a permanent bulwark against any change in the system of private property. The Parliament Act weakened it, of course, but, between ourselves, Cripps knows what he is talking about when he says that the Lords have still quite enough power to stop any serious Socialist proposals ever getting through. Even the House of Commons was not devised as an organ of "drastic change." The object of its elaborate machinery is to check the tyranny of the majority just as much as the tyranny of the Executive. It was set up as a safeguard of propertied interests. That is why it is a mistake to have an overwhelming majority. If Parliament is to work, the Opposition must be able to blow off steam and be strong enough to get an occasional concession and feel that it means something. Of course, the propertied class will always rule in any case, but it is a mistake to make it too obvious. What we call the English political genius consists in a capacity for making concessions and persuading the people who are ruled that they too are taking part in government.

I hope you will forgive all this theoretical talk. Because England has had a democratic system of this kind for so long, and because we are not in the habit of theorising much in this country, comparatively few of the elder Conservatives ever think it out. They act, as Conservatives should, by instinct and tradition. And that is all right when you have a man like Stanley Baldwin in charge. What frightens me a little to-day with all these countries going Fascist on the Continent is that some of the newer men who might succeed Baldwin talk loosely about dictatorship. That is a very dangerous game to play. We all know that a lot of nonsense is talked about liberty and that there is a limit beyond which we do not allow dangerous talk to go. But the reason why England is the place that I love to-day is just that we have learnt the wisdom of governing by consent, which means, when you've seen the inside of things, governing as we think best while allowing Socialists and Pacifists and the rest to say within limits what they like and to send their Davies and other revolutionaries along to be Members of our club. I can assure you that that is the system which works best.

Your Affectionate Uncle

THE MINER'S CASE

To the accompaniment of the General Election, the Mineworkers' Federation this week balloted its members on the question of a national strike. The miners' leaders have been taken to task in many quarters for their refusal to give up their ballot—which would mean in effect abandoning their claim to a national wage-advance. The Government, they are told, has at last promised to do something—it is still not quite clear what—about the "unification" of royalties; and it has exacted from the colliery owners a pledge to set up central selling machinery in every coalfield before the middle of next year. What more can the miners want? The periodical ascertainments of proceeds from the sale of coal are held to show that the industry cannot, in many coalfields, afford to pay higher wages at present. The Government, surely, is doing its best; the miners surely should be prepared to wait and see whether the new arrangements will result in an improvement in the industry's capacity to pay.

The miners, for their part, remain unconvinced. In 1927, under plea of emergency, they were compelled to work an extra hour a day, with a promise that the old hours would be restored as soon as the emergency was over. In fact, the additional hour meant a sharp fall in wages, less regular employment, and more power to the colliery owners to displace "obnoxious" men and to pursue a price-cutting policy which reacted on the wage-paying capacity of the industry. The "emergency" is not over yet, and it shows no sign of being over in any predictable future. Wages in most of the coalfields are still right down to the minimum rates which the miners were compelled to accept after their defeat in 1926, and they are nowhere far above these rates. According to the official figures, miners' cash earnings in 1934 averaged 9*s.* 1¾*d.* a shift, and £115 11*s.* 6*d.* a year, over the country as a whole; and if one or two of the most prosperous coalfields are left out, the average for the rest is not above £2 2*s.* a week, and in some, such as Durham, only about £2 a week.

The miners regard these wages as intolerable; they are not prepared to wait until the official ascertainments show that the industry can afford to raise them to a decent subsistence level. They claim that a living wage should be the first charge on the proceeds of coal mining—prior not only to profits in the strict sense, but to royalties and interest payments as well. They claim that if the Government can afford to subsidise farmers and shipowners, it can also afford to subsidise them, if in a proper ascertainment there is really not enough money in the industry to meet their legitimate claims. They want an advance of 2*s.* a shift; and they maintain that, if the Government wishes to avoid a strike, it should first grant their claim and then set about reorganising the coal industry in such a way as to increase its ability to pay.

As for the establishment of selling agencies in order to prevent competitive price-cutting, the miners' leaders are in favour of it; but they are not confident enough of its results, or of the Government's will to enforce a satisfactory scheme, to set their wage-claim aside on the strength of a promise which could not, at best, produce much effect for more than another year. Five years have passed since the Coal Mines Reorganisation Commission was established, with the task of rationalising the coal industry by means of amalgamation. Except in one or two coalfields, almost nothing has been done, in face of the owners' obstinate resistance and the Government's failure to give the Commission any effective backing. Will not the promised "unification" of royalties and establishment of selling agencies repeat the same dolorous history—a history repeated over and over again since Mr. Lloyd George's broken promise to carry out the terms of the Sankey Report? The miners have no confidence that it will not; they refuse to exchange their immediate wage-claim for a pig in a poke.

In 1923 the coal-miners of Great Britain numbered nearly a million and a quarter, and most of them were in fairly regular work. To-day, the number insured is well under a million, and about a quarter of those insured are out of work. More than a quarter of a million coal-miners have left the industry or died and not been replaced, and yet of those who remain nearly a quarter of a million are still out of work. Last year the quantity of coal raised was rather higher than in 1933; but the numbers employed continued to fall. Probably, with full work for those employed, the coal mines could produce their present output with not much over half a million workers, as compared with the million and a quarter of a dozen years ago.

If miners were automata and not human beings, so rapid a rate of obsolescence would not greatly matter. The obsolete agents of production could be scrapped, and the consequent losses quickly written off. But in these days human beings cannot be handled with impunity as ruthlessly as were the handloom weavers of a century ago. The unemployed miner has to be kept at the public expense; and even the Means Test cannot grind him down quite so far as the New Poor Law of 1834, with its hated "Bastilles." Nor can the employed be expected to endure with patience the economic consequences of a redundancy of labour. According to the letter of abstract economics, the miner is perhaps getting the equivalent of his "marginal productivity." But if that means less than a tolerable subsistence wage, there is going to be trouble, whatever the laws of capitalist economics may prescribe.

"But," say the coal-owners, "we cannot afford to pay any more. Look at the official ascertainments, which, even at the present wages, often show net losses, and even at the best inadequate profits on invested capital. We will not meet the miners nationally, or discuss their claims nationally; for wages must depend on capacity to pay, and that is different for every separate coalfield." It can be answered that it is also different for every separate undertaking, but that the owners have not been heard to propose fixing wages in accordance with each colliery's ascertained profits. There are highly profitable colliery undertakings even in areas which are generally depressed, and to these the low wages fixed by district averaging bring an excess return. There is, moreover, the old quarrel over the adequacy of the published figures to measure wage-paying capacity; for these figures relate to the sale of crude coal, and exclude proceeds from by-products and ancillary undertakings, out of which an increasing proportion of total profit is made. The miners claim that account should be taken of these sums in estimating capacity to pay. But the owners will have none of this, unless they are forced.

Plainly, it suits the owners best to keep the miners divided —to tie them down, coalfield by coalfield, by separate agreements so as to avoid national movements, and thus prevent the struggle from becoming " political," in the assurance that in purely industrial struggles unemployment weights the odds overwhelmingly on their side. It is common knowledge that in some of the coalfields to-day to be an active Trade Unionist is to invite victimisation. The active Trade Unionist is the first to be dismissed, and even when he is at work he is put into the worst " places," where he can earn least money. Preference is given, wherever it can be, to members of rival " Trade Unions " fostered and subsidised by the owners; complaints are answered by the introduction of blacklegs; established working rules, including those laid down by law, are openly disregarded in the confidence that the victims will not risk dismissal by laying a complaint. Admittedly these conditions are not universal; but in some coalfields at any rate they have been pushed so far as to rouse a resentment which will not be easily allayed.

What is to be done? If the miners strike, and the struggle is fought out purely as an industrial struggle, we do not see how they can win. The colliery owners can hold out far longer than the miners, and probably will do so rather than give way. With hundreds of thousands out of work, many of them for years on end, there are bound to be blacklegs, and blacklegging will lead to violence. The miners may be beaten again, as they were beaten in 1926, and assuredly a strike will not improve the prosperity of the industry. Those who say that a strike cannot solve the problem are perfectly right. But do they really expect the miners to acquiesce in an indefinite prolongation of their present servitude?

If they do expect this, they understand neither the miners nor human nature in general. There comes a point when men who have been used to better things will sooner risk all on a forlorn hope than give up hope and self-respect altogether. The miners have very nearly reached that breaking-point, and that is a political fact fully as significant as all the economic facts that can be adduced against them.

It is a truism that there can be no solution of the mining problem without thorough reorganisation of the industry. But experience shows that the owners cannot be forced to become efficient against their nature, or to work a scheme imposed on them from outside. Accordingly, effective reorganisation involves public ownership—probably in the form of a publicly owned Mining Corporation with largely autonomous regional units. It need not be called " nationalisation " if the change has to be made by a government which dislikes the term; but nationalisation in effect it must be.

But not even the most thorough reorganisation of coal-mining will by itself solve the miners' problem. Probably at least a quarter of a million miners have still to be moved out of the industry and either pensioned or found work elsewhere. At this point the mining problem is one and the same as the wider problem of the depressed areas, which the National Government has so lamentably failed to face.

Thirdly, even if reorganisation and re-employment were being pressed on at full speed, there would remain the problem of transition. That could be eased by immediate pensioning of the older miners; but, apart from this, the miners in work have, in our view, a fully valid claim to Government help, while the measure of reorganisation and re-employment are still to be faced. We have no love for subsidies; but we would far sooner see the taxpayers' money spent on temporary help in providing a living wage for the miners under public ownership than on subsidising shipowers or building unwanted battleships to make profits for armament makers. On this point, we believe the great mass of public opinion is with us, as far as it has been aroused at all. The existing wages are clearly indefensible on grounds of sheer humanity, and the public is well aware by now how large a share of the blame for the plight of the industry rests on the stupidity and obscurantism of the colliery-owners and on the Government's failure to enforce the measures requisite for reorganisation.

A LONDON DIARY

If truth were considered an electoral asset, the newspapers would have been telling us how much less rowdyism there has been at this election than at most previous elections and comparing the sweet reasonableness of 1935 with the riotous pre-war days when bad eggs and worse tomatoes were still used as political arguments. Instead, a few noisy meetings have been written up as headline news and propaganda based on them about the downfall of democracy and the justification for Fascism. I notice that Mr. Walter Elliot has contradicted the exciting story in the *Daily Express* of how he fought with his fists to protect himself and his wife at Glasgow, while even at Seaham people who have watched the campaign tell me that the accounts of Mr. MacDonald's broken-up meetings have been deliberately and ludicrously exaggerated. An admirable report of the Seaham election appeared from a special correspondent there in Monday's *Manchester Guardian*. The quotations he gave from Mr. MacDonald's speeches are in themselves enough to rouse any meeting to protest, and when one realises that these meetings were composed of under-nourished miners who had many of them been out of work for years and who had listened to Mr. MacDonald promising to change their condition in one election after another, my wonder is that the interrupters stopped at noise. Mr. MacDonald is a sensitive man, and I have no doubt that he felt his position keenly as he wandered round to " tiny meetings in poky halls and drab cinemas to be scoffed at and abused." The result was that he was on the defensive all the time and made matters far worse for himself by insulting his audiences before they had even interrupted him. He seems to have roused quiet meetings to wrath by telling people who asked questions that they were " very ignorant "—which is, after all, the reason for asking questions—and calling interrupters " asses " and " a collection of farmyard animals," and so forth.

* * *

A detached American observer who attended some of his meetings tells me that he saw no organised opposition of any sort, and thought that the booing and stamping was the pitiful protest of people who had been driven to despair and cynicism. He describes halls containing a handful of half-starved miners and their wives with their clothes threadbare and their boots in bits, shivering with cold (which would encourage stamping!) treated by Mr. MacDonald to nebulous promises and airy platitudes which they have heard repeated innumerable times since the war and which were now merely greeted with derisive laughter. His wonder was that they could still laugh at all, and his main comment is that nowhere but in England could you have found any capacity to jest left in these grim areas where all the human values had been sacrificed and where conditions seem to him as bad as in any poverty-stricken class-war areas of America. He describes Mr. MacDonald coming to such meetings " like an old lion who expects to be tormented " and bringing the torment on himself. When he talked about the peace policy of the Government, his audience shouted that what they wanted was " food in their bellies." at a later " stone dead " meeting, where there were neither cheers nor booing, he tells me that Mr. MacDonald came forward and pleaded sympathy on the ground that he had an " artistic temperament " which was quickly worn out by cruel heckling and heartless laughter. I am sorry for Mr. MacDonald. But if I had his record I would not expect rhetoric to go down in Seaham.

* * *

I am glad to see that the Haldane Club—a body to which many Labour Party barristers and solicitors belong—has appointed a delegate to an interesting Congress which is to be held in Paris at the end of this month. The League for the Rights of Man, an organisation which has considerable influence, particularly with the Radical Socialists in France, in spite of its flamboyant name, has joined with the Inter-

national Juridical Association—a continental society of anti-Fascist lawyers—in organising a Conference on German law and penal practice. One of the subjects down for discussion is the position of Thaelmann, who has been in prison ever since the Nazis secured power, and who has never yet been tried for any crime, though a trial is always reported to be positively coming soon. No doubt we shall once again hear a great deal of indignant talk about the folly of interfering with the internal affairs of another country, just as we did when the "counter process" was held in London during the trial of Dimitrov and the others who were accused of setting fire to the Reichstag. The truth is that to criticise and expose injustice is everyone's business, and that the counter-process in England and the "Brown Book" which figured so largely in the Reichstag fire trial played a considerable part in gaining Dimitrov his hearing, and therefore in his release. Cynics and pessimists should remember that Göring never had the satisfaction of getting Dimitrov at his mercy, which he told the court he was waiting for, and that Nazi Germany is to-day even more anxious for this country's good opinion than it was in 1933.

* * *

Coal-black Africans do not often play a part in British general elections, so that a good deal of interest has naturally been aroused by two African representatives of the Aborigines' Protection Society who have been attending Mr. Malcolm MacDonald's meetings in the Bassetlaw division. I heard these men state their case some months ago, and I have not yet heard it answered. Their case is not against Mr. Malcolm MacDonald personally, but against him as Colonial Secretary. The Colonial Office seem to have introduced in the Gold Coast the kind of regime which we should expect Mussolini to set up in Abyssinia, and there seems the less justification for it in that the Gold Coast has never been "conquered." According to the best British tradition, our authority there was partially extended by a series of treaties with the local chiefs, and at first the local organisation of government was preserved intact. This amounted to a kind of primitive democracy. The chiefs and kings, elected from certain families, were subject to control by elected elders and councillors, and had no legislative powers of their own. Towards the end of the last century the more progressive of these elected councillors formed the Aborigines' Rights Protection Society, which became the channel for communication between the British Government and the native States. The whole of the democratic organisation has now been destroyed by a Government ordinance. Paramount chiefs have been given absolute powers, and in place of their former semi-democratic control the three and a half million natives were offered nine seats in the Legislative Council as against the twenty seats given to the thousand Europeans in the Colony. On the Executive Council, which is, of course, the important body, the native population had no representative at all. At about the same time that the Sedition Bill was introduced into this country the Gold Coast Sedition Ordinance was rushed through the Legislative Council. It is a far more drastic affair than the British Sedition Act. It seems to prohibit almost all types of political activity. The Governor has the power to ban any newspaper or book at will. The Gold Coast Aborigines Society was naive enough to think that it only had to appeal to the British Government to regain recognition and to get its native grievances redressed. But when its representatives arrived in this country they seem to have been told that the Colonial Office would only receive one deputation about the Ordinance, and that they had already chosen to see one, led by Sir Otoni Atta, who had, I'm told, introduced one of the Ordinances to which they objected! It was only after they had been in England over a year that they got any interview at all with the Colonial Office, though as I know from talking to them, they are reasonable and quiet men with a case to state. Perhaps the case is not easy to answer.

* * *

A very curious sidelight on one section of the electorate reaches me from a friend who attended a crowded political meeting in the inn of a Sussex village. The speakers were the sitting member, a Peer, and a fellow Lord. The sitting Lord made the orthodox Government speech—more workers, more homes, more confidence. His fellow Peer had recently returned from Germany, where apparently he broke bread with Hitler. Germany, we were given to understand, was a maligned turtle-dove. No signs of militarism in the streets! No signs of unemployment in the factories! A peaceable and peace-loving nation desired nothing so much as English friendship. Why, then, wouldn't we be friends? Because of the French, who, for their own sinister purposes, delighted to divide us. *A bas*, therefore, the French. A crowded audience listened politely and accorded polite applause. A little later, however, it rose to a Sussex comedian whose local anecdotes were rapturously received. Afterwards came informal talk. Most of those present, farmers and agricultural labourers, actually said that they would like a war. A war would liven things up, give employment and raise prices. Against whom were we to fight? Against the French, of course. We always have fought the French, and we have been "tied up" with them now far too long. Not a word about Italy and Abyssinia; not a word about the League; not a word about sanctions. Odder still was a Conservative meeting at which the speaker declared that the National Government had reduced unemployment to one million from nine millions! Presumably he had muddled up this country with the United States.

* * *

Mr. Osbert Sitwell gaily writes to suggest that, since the *Daily Mail* puts "For King and Country" in every issue, the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION ought to have as its slogan "Half a League, Half a League Onward." The joke is not new and it is less apposite at the moment than it was. For as the half-League goes onward it becomes rather more like a whole League. Some time ago, when another Committee was appointed to co-ordinate the efforts of other sub-committees and other committees, Sagittarius wrote to me:

> Like leaves in Vallombrosa,
> Like virgins in Virginia,
> Like monks on Monte Rosa,
> Like chiefs in Abyssinia,
> Like banditry in China,
> Like Turcomen in Khiva,
> Like herring in Loch Fyne are
> Committees in Geneva.

—which just about expressed my feelings too. I am still as sceptical as anyone about the League and quite alive to the fact that its new activity is due to Great Britain's sudden anxiety about the Empire and about security in general if the League disappears down the drain. But, all the same, I regard the present effort of about fifty nations to do something together to stop a war as a remarkable and ever-exhilarating spectacle, and I'd like to see it succeed.

* * *

A correspondent writes to tell me that he has discovered that during the nude scenes in the revue at the Windmill Theatre one is not allowed to use opera glasses. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mrs. C. P. Bates.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

There were unusual sights in Sidbury during the Silence. Drawn up in the line of cars and lorries was a mare being led by a farm-hand, and followed by two ordinarily frisky colts. It was amazing to see the equine observance of the Silence.—*Worcester Daily Times.*

What we have to do is to pile up and pile up and pile up the income of the industry in this way and that way and the other way.—Mr. MacDonald at Seaham, reported in the *Manchester Guardian.*

If only men could love each other like dogs, the world would be a paradise.—James Douglas in *Sunday Express*.

With oysters within reach of most of us, no one need despair of the demands of fashion nor of the beauty that is dependent upon right-eating as well as right-thinking.—*Daily Telegraph*.

Anti-Catarrh (Public Schools) Vaccine.—Prepared from cultures of organisms from patients suffering from " colds " in public schools. —Leaflet.

" The present Labour administration on the London County Council is the only one for more than a generation which has bought foreign pencils for use in their schools and for the paltry saving they think they have effected they can be justly accused of making the children submitted to their charge ' foreign minded ' by having them taught to write, figure, and draw with foreign pencils for the period of the next twelve months."—Mr. T. H. Rowney in *Manchester Guardian*.

The League of Nations Union, it is scarcely necessary to add, is a war-mongering institution dominated by war-mongering politicians and prelates.—*Daily Mail*.

For all but the bigots of party there can only be one choice possible. The genius of our country expects it from all but the bigots.—Scrutator in *Sunday Times*.

Well, maybe my news-sense is all wrong, but it seems to me that when the possessor of one of the oldest baronetcies marries his deceased wife's sister it savours of half a column.—Lord Donegall in *Sunday Dispatch*.

" If Mussolini had attended a Sunday School like those we have here, what a different man he would have been."—Rev. Dr. Mackinnon, reported in *Scottish Daily Express*.

MOTORS AND MAGISTRATES

POPULAR condemnation has little effect in this country. Our divorce laws remain in force, litigation continues to be costly and dilatory, imprisonment for debt is common, the *Daily Mail* is bought freely, and we are preparing for war. Obsolete institutions, like threatened men, live long. There is probably no institution so universally condemned, or so hopelessly obsolete, as lay magistrates sitting in the " Police " Court. As they were when Shakespeare wrote of Justice Shallow, so they were in the time of Dickens and Thackeray, and so they remain to-day. Selected for the most part for political partisanship, their chairmen often incompetent from age and infirmity, served by clerks for the most part in private practice, they deal with more than nine-tenths of the crime and with an even greater proportion of the family disputes in England and Wales. There is hardly a phase of working-class life in which they have not jurisdiction. Yet their decisions command no confidence whatever. The police, whom it is almost their only principle to support, look upon them as useless and ask for the appointment of stipendiaries. Their lenient sentences upon motorists bring upon them the censure of Ministers, chief constables and a large section of the press. Motorists complain of their incompetence, and ask for special courts for motoring cases. In Northern Ireland the judicial functions of lay magistrates have recently been abolished, the Attorney General saying in the course of debate that England would follow this example within five years. Legal opinion has for a long time been in favour of the substitution of stipendiaries for lay magistrates, and this view was strongly expressed at the meeting of the Law Society at Hastings. Hitherto the abolition or reform of the lay justices has been prevented mainly because of that very political complexion of the Bench which constitutes its greatest defect. It is difficult for any party to move when action would affect the position of great numbers of local party leaders and workers. Now, however, the motorists, with all the direct and indirect influence which they can exert, are a force fully equal to the magistrates, except in the Labour Party. Working-class feeling, which to some extent affects Labour policy, is strongly against the lay magistrates, partly as a result of their attitude during the general strike and in trade disputes, partly because unjust and careless decisions are widely discussed and bitterly resented by the poor. Social reform, like new inventions, usually comes about as a bye-product. It was the light and powerful engine developed by the motor car industry which made flying possible. The motorist has been brought into the " Police " Court, he has seen its iniquities, and has himself suffered from them. It is true that the " Police " Court, as at present constituted, is not fit to try motoring cases. But the court that is not good enough for motorists is not good enough for anybody. Should motorists be placed in a privileged position it will seriously affect public confidence in equality before the law.

It is true that the penalties imposed by magistrates in respect of motoring offences are often unduly lenient. The reason for this in most cases, however, is uncertainty on the part of the Bench as to whether they were right in deciding to convict. There is a story of a Kentish magistrate who, when asked what his Bench had done with a man charged with stealing apples, replied, " We give him a month, and if we'd ha' been certain he was guilty we'd ha' given him six." This story is told, with variations, of courts all over the country. I have myself known this principle to have been adopted in some, and strongly suspected it in many cases in which I have been myself concerned. A fair example of what often happens occurred in a case in which I defended a short time ago. The defendant was charged with dangerous, and in the alternative careless, driving. It was alleged that he had driven at 40 miles an hour along a certain road, swerving from side to side. The police officer who was called for the prosecution said that he saw the defendant's car travel at 40 miles an hour for a distance of 800 yards. In cross-examination he said that he watched the car travel the 800 yards, stopped another car, got in and pursued the defendant, who did not slacken speed, and overtook and stopped him. He was compelled to admit that the point at which defendant was stopped was some 1,200 yards from the starting point, but agreed that the pursuing car could not have done 100 miles an hour. The defendant had explained his swerving by saying that a pothole had affected his steering, but the first officer swore there were no potholes. A second policeman who had tried the car on the same road said the steering was in perfect order. In cross-examination I suggested that he had not been over a pothole, to which he replied: " Oh yes, Sir, over several." The Bench after a consultation said they thought there was evidence of dangerous driving over the cross-roads, and when I ventured to point out that there was no suggestion of cross-roads in the charge the Chairman said he meant the road in question. They considered however that it was a trivial offence, the fine would be ten shillings, and the defendant's licence would not be endorsed. The police pointed out that they were bound to endorse the licence, which caused the Chairman some embarrassment. I have, of course, known instances in which undue severity was exercised, but the main trouble in motoring cases is wrong decisions as to whether offences have been proved and uncertainty as to guilt leading to small penalties or to " dismissed on payment of costs." Any advocate with experience of motoring cases can confirm this.

The important point for all who care about the administration of justice is to focus public opinion on the essential thing, the reform of our courts of summary jurisdiction, and to prevent the various forces which might be directed towards that end from being diverted to removing abuses affecting particular classes. Fortunately there is one direction in which reform can be both effective and cheap, and to which there need be no great difficulty in obtaining general assent. In most courts even as at present constituted the Clerk to the Justices is the person of greatest importance. Even though he cannot enforce his view of the law, still less of the facts, upon his Bench, in practice his view is usually accepted. Yet out of 940 clerks

in this country 890 are in private practice, which means that the persons who appear in their courts are actually or potentially clients of the clerks. On the day on which this was written a man came in to instruct me in a case before a certain Bench, saying he had been sent by the clerk, who was his solicitor. He added that I was to apply for the case to be adjourned, as the clerk himself would be away on the day fixed for the hearing. I do not suppose for a moment that the clerk had said anything about an adjournment, but it was an apt instance of what goes on. In many districts licensing work and police prosecutions are monopolised by the justices' clerks, who cannot appear in their own courts but do so in each other's. The effect of this upon the public can be imagined. As the Lord Chief Justice said in dealing with a case where the firm of a magistrate's clerk had been consulted on a matter which subsequently came before the clerk's court, "Justice should not only be done, but be manifestly and undoubtedly seen to be done."

All clerks to the Justices should be whole time civil servants, not, as at present, appointed by the magistrates. They should periodically be moved from court to court to give opportunity for promotion and to prevent unduly close association with local justices, police and other persons. Clerks should rule and not merely advise on questions of law and procedure, and it would be an advantage if they also had some control over the question of punishment. This would in effect make the clerks stipendiaries sitting with a permanent jury, but so long as magistrates were allowed to continue to call themselves J.P.s I do not suppose there would be much opposition. The cost would be inconsiderable, as districts could readily be amalgamated and served by one clerk instead of several, with a considerable economy in staff. The principle that public officials should not be in private practice has been accepted by the Local Government Act of 1929 with regard to Medical Officers of Health.

It is important that the lay elements in the administration of justice should not be lost. Magistrates should be selected and appointed on a different basis, there should be a retiring age, and they should in motoring cases be allowed to sit with assessors having technical knowledge as a County Court Judge does with a Medical Assessor. But the line of least resistance in magisterial reform is to deal with the magistrates' clerk. It is also the way to real reform, and not mere whitewashing.

SOLICITOR

DANGERS OF SUPERSTITION

I HAVE often defended superstition, but that was because I did not quite believe in it. Superstition seems to me, indeed, to be defensible only if we do not quite believe in it. In that case we simply continue as play terrors that our ancestors felt in earnest—terror of spilling the salt, terror of sitting down as one of thirteen at a table, terror of seeing the new moon through glass. Not entirely as play, perhaps, and yet not entirely seriously. I go to some pains not to see the new moon through glass: at the same time, if I happen to see it through a taxi-window, I do not find the rest of the month darkened for me with a black cloud of apprehension. I dislike sitting down at a table of thirteen, but I have done so and neither the first man who rose nor my more timid self died within the year. I have known ill-luck to follow ill-omens, but I have known still more cases in which the ill-omens had no unlucky consequences. Never in my life have I been able to trace any connection between the sight of this or that number of magpies and good or evil fortune. If the nine of spades falls to the floor, I am a little unhappy, but I have dropped the card more than once without injury to myself or, so far as I know, to any one else.

Probably, I should never have defended superstitions if I had not grown up in a world that had few of them. Superstition had a bad name there. It was a name that we applied to many of the beliefs of Christians belonging to a different branch of the Church. Hence, we were inclined to think of all superstitions as something unworthy of a rational being, and, even when we half-believed in them, we pretended to treat them as little more than a nursery game. It was like our belief in ghosts—a good excuse for more or less enjoyable tremors, for we always derided the belief in ghosts, however much we were afraid of them. We may have been superstitious in our nerves, but our brains were doggedly on the side of reason. So much was this so that, for a period during my boyhood, I made a practice of walking under ladders, and, if salt was spilled on the table I left it lying there.

As I grew older, my attitude changed. For one thing, I began to have a sentimental regard for old superstitions as one has for old villages, and to wish to see them preserved. For another thing, I began to be infected with superstitions by the company I kept, and, though I never believed that an ill omen is actually the cause of any misfortune that follows it, it seemed possible that it might be the prediction of it. A black cat, while not being the cause of good luck, might conceivably be the sure precursor of good luck; and I was always on the look out for precursors of good luck. If a friend was ill, and I saw a lucky number on a passing bus, my heart leaped up because I liked to think that this was a sign that my friend would get better. If, on the other hand, someone sent a gift of white flowers unmixed with others to the house, my heart sank for I read this as a sign that my friend would get worse. At the same time, I rather juggled with my conscience in the interpretation of omens. When the omen was unlucky I assured myself that superstitions were all nonsense; and I did my best not to believe in any omens except those that foretold good fortune. This, I admit, was unscrupulous, but it seems to me to be the only safe way of being superstitious.

At the present time the world appears to be becoming steadily more superstitious. People must believe something, and, after a course of trying to believe nothing, they commonly end by believing anything. The opinions of many of my young friends in politics seem to me to be based on superstition. It is the lighter rather than the graver forms of superstition that I had in mind, however, when I sat down to write; and these are certainly spreading if we can judge from the evidence in the newspapers. I take it for granted that all those astrological forecasts would not appear in the press if somebody did not believe in them. It is very difficult not to believe in what an astrologer tells you about your birthday; and, if you had the word of an astrologer for it that Saturday next will be a good day for making money on the turf, you would need to have a strong will not to have a few shillings on a horse in the Manchester November Handicap.

I wish there were statistics telling us how many people actually follow the advice of these press astrologers. Last Sunday, for example, an astrologer in one of the papers advised his readers: "Even if you are an agnostic, go to church today. Angels and men are very near each to the other" It would be interesting to learn from the clergy whether they noticed any great influx of agnostics into their churches last Sunday. Were the collections conspicuously larger? Were thousands of obvious strangers to religion to be seen desperately trying to find their place in the Prayer-book? One can imagine the guilty start of the President of the Wimblefold Ethical Society, who had denounced superstition all his life and had yet gone to church on the advice of an astrologer, on finding that just behind him was sitting the secretary of the Society with his wife and five daughters. What a conscience each of them must have had! To have learned to doubt so much, and yet not to be able to doubt the word of an astrologer! A clergyman stated the other day that churchgoing is now on the upgrade, and it may be that this particular astrologer is responsible for it. I noticed the other Sunday that, adopting the language of the racing expert, he gave as his "nap": "Best thing of the day is church or chapel-going."

This is all for the good of society; but the astrologers occasionally give advice to follow which, it seems to me,

might be disastrous. For instance, one day last week a newspaper warned the entire human race: "Avoid the opposite sex, if possible, or there will be trouble." How many husbands, I wonder, took the advice and telephoned that they would not be home that evening to dinner? And did they avoid trouble by doing so? Did young lovers, too, find excuses during the day for avoiding each other's company? One can imagine a painful situation in which Bert (who believes in astrology) cancels an engagement to take Gladys (who does not) to the theatre. Dare he tell her the real reason? Would she not be likely to send back the ring if he told her that he was avoiding her company because an astrologer had warned him to do so?

If the world takes astrologers seriously, indeed, and begins to act on their advice, I am afraid a good many people will be in for unpleasant surprises. The other day, for example, a newspaper gave as its advice for the following twenty-four hours: "Be bold. A good day for asking for promotion and a rise in salary." Imagine the scene that must have resulted in many an office with a large and superstitious staff. The manager has scarcely arrived when the most incompetent member of the staff approaches him, and with a confident air suggests that he should have another hundred a year. The manager does not mind that: he almost enjoys telling the man what he thinks of him. As the rest of the staff follow in a promotion-seeking procession, however, his temper becomes frayed. He feels that he is the victim of a conspiracy. In his wrath he begins to sack some of his best men. The day ends for the staff in general lamentation. Or does the opposite happen, and everybody get promotion and a rise? I should like to think so.

Do people, then, really believe in astrology? And, if not, why has it become so popular in the press? Is it because superstition is growing, or is it because it has faded to such a degree that it can safely be turned into a popular amusement? If I thought it was fading, I should be strongly in favour of it; but I sometimes wonder whether it is not growing, and, if it is, I dislike it as a Conservative dislikes the thin end of the wedge.

For the time being, fortunately, superstition is merely devoted to the encouragement of optimism. We are allowed to know little but the rosy side of what the stars have in store for us. I confess this is all I want to know about the future. My object as a superstitious human being, indeed, is not knowledge for the sake of knowledge, but cheerfulness. That is why I hate serious fortune-telling with cards and like black cats, horseshoes turned the right way up, and dark men coming into the house first thing on New Year's morning. Not that I believe they matter, of course; but such things somehow raise our spirits. Y. Y.

Correspondence

PACIFISTS AND SANCTIONS

SIR,—In ten minutes church bells and factory whistles, guns and maroons, will be warning us to remember that there has been a war on. The warning seems to be more necessary than ever this year, when even our sincerest pacifists are reaching for their rifles.

In your last issue, Mr. Joad persuasively argued the pacifist case for support of the League. It is a dangerous argument. Admittedly the immediate practical value of uncompromising pacifism may be negligible, but its ultimate moral value is incalculable. I remember once hearing Mr. Joad say that while he was not an anti-vivisectionist, he was glad that there were anti-vivisectionists. Similarly while I am not a pacifist, I am glad that there are pacifists.

I also remember once hearing Mr. Joad say that if Socialism could only be achieved through bloodshed, then he felt that we must somehow get along without Socialism. In reply it might be argued that the world is suffering far more terribly in refusing Socialism than ever it would have to suffer in accepting it. Be that as it may, Mr. Joad's opinion was at least comprehensible, and from the pacifist standpoint, logical. Now, however, he seems to be accepting the worst of both worlds. He is prepared to renounce his pacifism, and for what?

For the fond hope that he, plus a Trade Union leadership which showed its mettle in 1914, plus a Communist Party whose influence is minute, can persuade the War Office and the Navy League and the City and the F.B.I. to use the League to establish a common law. "So soon as it appears that it is selfish interests, those of British Imperialism, for example, rather than public law which is being promoted, then I should withdraw my support." The answer to that is that never, for even one moment, has the National Government been moved by anything other than the interests of British Imperialism. Those interests are conflicting. Therefore the Government's policies are conflicting. But there is no conflict of motives.

Now the bells are sounding, and my typewriter must not break the hush of the peace that passeth all understanding.

15 Morton Crescent, N.14. JON EVANS

SIR,—Mr. Joad's attempt to reconcile conscientious objection with the "Genevafist" position gives rise to serious difficulties.

(1) Mr. Joad admits that the horrors resulting from "the use of League force" may be no less than those resulting from any other war.

(2) It is always uncertain, and even improbable, that the avowed ends for which a war is waged will be achieved even if it is brought to a successful conclusion. Until the war is over, no one can tell whether a League victory will "promote public law." The war after next may never come, or it may come in spite of a present war to prevent it. An *immediate* European war is at least one war that can be avoided.

(3) Why should a pacifist allow any "duress" to oblige him to advocate war, which he regards as utter wickedness and folly as a "second best" course?

(4) If he is prepared to advocate war, how can he conscientiously refuse to take part in it?

(5) Is not the cause of pacifism doomed if its supporters are unwilling to be regarded as "unpractical prigs," and if they are not prepared, if necessary, to be put in concentration camps—if, in short, they are afraid to remain pacifists in war-time?

86 Banbury Road, Oxford. ROBERT LIDDELL

THE TRAGEDY OF SOUTH TYROL

SIR,—I read with much interest and deep emotion the splendid article on South Tyrol, published in your latest issue. Needless to say that every word which your correspondent writes is entirely true. May I, however, being myself a native of that much suffering country, call, in addition to that what your correspondent writes, the attention of your readers to the moral stress under which Mussolini's Abyssinian adventure has of late placed my countrymen—a thing of which surprisingly little seems to be known in England?

As if the hardships suffered under Fascist rule were not enough, the men of South Tyrol are now being forced to go to war for a cause which is entirely alien to them. One would think: "What have people of German stock to do with an Italian war in Abyssinia? Nothing!" But this is not so. One section of the German nation *is* involved in the Abyssinian war and loses thereby life and property; these are the men of South Tyrol. During the recent weeks, one might have seen them daily, in Bozen (Bolzano) and in the other towns of South Tyrol—fair and dark-haired giants from mountains and valleys, sons of peasants and of shepherds—pouring in endless streams into the waiting trains, accompanied by their weeping relatives who, maybe, are saying farewell to them for ever. Altogether, several thousands of these Germans of South Tyrol have been mobilised by Italy. There is hardly an Italian garrison in Italy or on African soil where one would not find scores of these men from South Tyrol. In Sicily and Elba, in Libya and Somaliland, in Eritrea and in Abyssinia—everywhere they are stationed, in the uniform of an alien army in the service of a foreign cause. The number of deserters among them is, nevertheless, entirely insignificant. But there is tragedy in their situation. They are now faithfully serving the King of Italy because, in their overwhelming majority, they are loyal to the State to which they now—though not by their own free will—belong.

And what is the reward of all this fidelity? The forcible "Italianisation" of the population; the prohibition of the use of the native language and traditions; the complete suppression

of all personal and political liberties; fines and imprisonments without end. The Italians have used as one of the reasons for their attack upon Abyssinia the alleged barbarism of that nation. It is not for me to pass judgment upon that; I have never been to Abyssinia and cannot know the conditions prevailing there. But I *do* know what is taking place in my native country. The Italians rule there as though South Tyrol were an African colony. Would it not be just to make the Italians understand that before embarking on an ill-timed adventure of defending civilisation in Abyssinia, they would do better to see that their rule in the Southern Tyrol is more in accordance with this sacred word?

15 West Halkin Street, S.W.1. RUDOLF MOLDAN

VOTING IN GREECE

SIR,—It may have seemed to some of your readers odd that the Greek plebiscite should be held under a Dictatorship—odder still the facts.

We have before us a copy of the *Hellenikon Mellon* of November 4th, publishing authoritative, but none the less curious figures of the results. Kavalla, for instance, stronghold of Republicanism, polled 29,415: Royalists 28,224, Democrats 1,065. Athens (district No. 37), Royalists 3,638, Democrats 30; but hats off to the solitary Democrat in a poll of 1,282 in district No. 35 of the Peiraeus!

But such results are possible. Having seen the polling in progress, we begin to understand the reason of the 95 per cent. vote for the Royalists. On November 3rd, the main church of the place, commandeered for purposes of the plebiscite, was guarded by the military, with bayonets fixed and crown badges already on their hats. The voter was given two papers, one of which was to be sealed up in an envelope—transparent. One was blue with a carefully printed crown, the other a crude red with the smaller and smudged Phoenix of the Democracy, so that the authorities (and there were no Democratic representatives present) could see at a glance exactly how each islander voted. For reasons of bread-and-butter practically all Democrats abstained. No effort was made to limit the number of votes per person; a schoolboy admitted to voting eighteen times for the King. Local results were published last night—twelve votes recorded for the Democrats.

TWO BRITISH RESIDENTS IN GREECE

THE BRITISH EMPIRE UNION

SIR,—It is gratifying to find that, at long last, the British Empire Union disclaims any desire of using names for political capital.

For years this "absolutely non-party organisation" circulated a booklet in which it was claimed that the late Archbishop of Canterbury had, in a speech in the House of Lords, condemned the Socialist Sunday Schools; whereas in fact he refused to condemn them, regarding their teaching as definitely Christian. The speech had been deliberately twisted so as to make it appear that the Archbishop's strictures on the Communist Sunday Schools extended to the Socialist schools. The attention of the late President of the Union was drawn by me to this gross misrepresentation, but without obvious effect; and later Mr. Reginald Wilson himself was challenged on the subject.

Possibly the booklet no longer circulates; but this may be because it had served its purpose, or because of the higher ethical standard now adopted by the General Secretary. Can he enlighten us? MAURICE SPENCER

Holt Cottage, Whitstable.

PHEASANT SHOOTING

SIR,—I am one of those "Townsmen"—so scornfully derided by your anonymous contributor "Countryman"—who get a great deal of simple pleasure by having shooting as an objective which takes them, in fine weather or in foul, into the country. It is a real delight to have an effective interest there and to have kept in contact with the countryside, its problems and pursuits, "since the early spring." It is not uninteresting to understand and watch at close quarters the vivid struggle for existence which goes on throughout the year between birds and vermin and between one sort of vermin and another. It does not shock me to be told that a stoat which had driven a partridge or a pheasant from her nest and was about to devour her eggs has been shot. Even the pheasant, "who is a foreigner . . . whom we can neither love nor respect"—so different of course from a native weasel—has beauty and a habit of life all its own, which it is not uninstructive to observe in surroundings as natural as possible.

It is of course true that many of these "foreigners" are in some sense tame; but I should be amused to watch your contributor's attempt to "catch them with his hand."

It is hardly surprising that "the woman who helps his wife with the housework" does not understand nor help "Countryman" to understand anything about shooting. But it is really very stupid of him to think that "men, townsmen for the most part, think it sport to shoot birds tame as chickens."

Where did "Countryman" see a chicken forty feet up flying at 40 m.p.h.? What chance of hitting it does he think a man would have who is "so pampered in his riches that he cannot carry his own gun"? How often has he seen a man out shooting without a gun? No doubt the womenfolk he quotes may think what they know nothing of "a funny sort of sport." I had a bedmaker who thought a van Eyck reproduction "was not pretty."

But let "Countryman" consider some facts. Pheasant shooting begins on October 1st, but the "great event" of covert shooting is postponed at least till November, so that the birds may be strong on the wing and have ready access to the tree tops. This ensures for a first day some high and certainly some swift birds, and it is not long before pheasants flying over the trees are singularly unlike "tame chickens" which even people who shoot do not think worth shooting.

What makes a townsman really love rod and gun is the twofold joy of getting into unspoiled country and there pitting such skill as he may laboriously acquire against the best equipped of the creatures of nature. Shooting has an additional advantage in bringing the townsman into touch with the denizens of the countryside—the farmer with his problems of weather and crops; the keeper with his skill and knowledge; the village postman, a few labourers, some of the unemployed and the local wag, who come as beaters and enjoy a day's sport. It is not easy otherwise for the townsman to become friendly with them.

"Countryman" is entitled to his prejudices, but it is childish to assert that his is "no exaggerated picture." As well might one accuse him of keeping a farm for the pleasure of slaughtering whatever tame creatures he imprisons upon it.

2 Woburn Square, W.C. S. COPE MORGAN

RATS

SIR,—Rat Week has come round again and all good citizens have been urged to destroy as many rats as possible. And in self-defence we must destroy rats. At the same time, however, we ought not to feel too superior to the rat. In the main he is a higher animal than man is; he uses no poison gas, never slanders his neighbour, is not ashamed of his naked body, has no barbarous criminal code, has no belief in original sin, wages no war. Moreover he is clever, so clever that a Cambridge scientist of note holds that if man eliminates himself by bombs and gas the rat will be the only animal capable of founding a new civilisation.

The rat is not an ugly animal; to me it is more beautiful than many a society lady's pug. Whether it has an immortal soul or not I do not know, but that it has a body and that this body can suffer pain everyone knows. And in getting rid of the rat hardly any consideration is taken of the fact that he usually has a vile exit. Is there a rat poison that is painless? Is it not a fact that most poisons either burn his guts out agonisingly or transform him into a tortured bag of cement?

If I ill-treat a dog or starve a chicken I shall be charged at the local court and fined or imprisoned, and the magistrate will tell me that I am a cruel brute, yet when I lay down unspeakable pain in poison form for rats I am a respectable citizen doing my duty to the community. It would appear that the theory is that because Italy treats Abyssinians as if they were rats, we should treat rats as if they were Abyssinians.

Of course, there is a distinction between dogs and rats. Dogs and chickens are property, and of course the function of law is to protect property. The rat is not property; on the contrary he eats property. Yet the rat is very much on the same level as many property owners: he is not worse than the humans who fatten on dividends and exploitation. The crowd at Newmarket is on the whole much more dangerous to society than the rat is.

The scientists could have discovered a painless poison for rats if they had not been so busy discovering painful poisons for the human rats that are termed "the enemy." After the world war that looms so sinisterly ahead of us, the few survivors will creep from their holes and try to begin life again. Perhaps they will have a fellow feeling for the other rodents that dwell in holes, and

they may then poison the rats with morphia. Until that happy time comes I mean to keep down my rats by means of spring traps, that in eight cases out of ten hit the victim an honest blow on the back of the neck and dispatch him with only a tenth of a second's agony. A. S. NEILL

Summerhill, Leiston, Suffolk.

ROAD STATISTICS

SIR,—Your correspondents, like your contributor, have failed to spot the fallacy which must be involved in almost any attempt to interpret the analysis of fatal road accidents which was made by the Ministry of Transport and discussed on your Motoring page on October 26th. In the official report on this analysis 1,500 fatal accidents were classified according to their circumstances and causes, and the numbers occurring in each circumstance and attributed to each cause were expressed as percentages of the total number investigated. These percentages are most misleading and are not an adequate basis for conclusions of any kind.

The fallacy involved in attempting to interpret these figures is most obvious in the statement that, of 456 fatal accidents which occurred at road junctions or cross-roads, only 29 occurred at places controlled by police or traffic signals. Is then the uncontrolled crossing nearly 15 times as dangerous as the controlled crossing? Certainly not, since for every controlled crossing in Great Britain there must be 20, 30, 50—I doubt if anybody knows how many—uncontrolled crossings. More uncontrolled crossings are "at risk." The fatal accident *rate* per controlled crossing almost certainly *exceeds* the rate per uncontrolled crossing; the uncontrolled crossing is less dangerous. Obviously so, since generally speaking the uncontrolled are the less busy crossings. Common sense indicates that to control any particular crossing will make it safer, but these statistics do not prove it; they mean nothing.

More "startling" are the statistics of fatal accidents classified by the estimated speed of the mechanically propelled vehicles involved; in only $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the accidents the speed was recorded as being over 30 miles an hour. It looks as if high speed were not dangerous, nay even to be encouraged; but how much high-speed motoring was "at risk," compared with motoring at less than 30 miles an hour? In other words, what were the fatal accident rates per running vehicle-hour for speeds above and below 30 miles per hour? Nobody knows; the statistics mean nothing.

Most poignant for the guilt-feelings of the harassed pedestrian are the percentages of fatal accidents "caused" by drivers (alias motorists) and pedestrians. 25.1 per cent. were caused by drivers, 49.1 per cent. by pedestrians. The pedestrian was twice as guilty; let him in future be subjected to twice as much regulation as the motorist! But there are about 42 million persons in Great Britain, of whom at least 30 millions are hardened pedestrians; there are only about $2\frac{1}{4}$ million mechanically propelled road vehicles, and perhaps twice as many regular drivers. What are the rates of accident-causation per pedestrian and per driver? About three times as high for drivers as for pedestrians. But is the average driver and the average pedestrian "at risk" for equal numbers of hours per week, and to an equal degree during each hour? Nobody knows; the statistics mean nothing.

It is true, Sir, that the Ministry of Transport did not say that they meant anything; but then why were they ever made public?

36 Regent Square, W.C.1. FREDERICK BROWN

CARL MIERENDORFF

SIR,—May I supplement the information you published about Carl Mierendorff? He never was a Communist. He is, as your correspondent points out, without an international reputation. He is a courageous man who, since the middle of June, 1933, has suffered the hardships of life in prison and concentration camps, and whose record is representative of the noblest part of the German intelligentsia that belongs to the war generation.

Mierendorff was a boy of seventeen when he joined the army as a volunteer in 1914. He fought through the whole war, was decorated for valour, and became deaf in one ear as a result of being struck by splinters from a shell. After the war, he entered the Social-Democratic Party. Having studied political economy and graduated at Heidelberg University, he went to Berlin and was, for two years, a secretary of the National Union of Transport Workers (Deutscher Transportarbeiterverband). The following year saw him the brilliant editor of the *Hessische Volkszeitung*, the Social-Democratic paper in Darmstadt. From 1926 to 1928 he was a secretary of the Parliamentary Social-Democratic Party in the Reichstag. In 1929 he became the press officer of the Hessian Home Ministry in Darmstadt. He was elected to the Reichstag in 1930, and re-elected in 1932 and 1933.

It was as a speaker and a journalist that Mierendorff began to make his mark in German politics. He often swept his audience by his lucid argument, his debating power, his keen wit, and his passionate love of liberty. He had an extraordinary grasp of, and a deep insight into, public affairs. He was one of a very small group of friends who, from 1930, foresaw the disaster of the German Republic. He realised that nothing but evil would come from the Social-Democrats tolerating the Brüning Government. He strove in vain to convince the leaders of the Party that the only hope lay in strong and active opposition. His is the tragic tale of talent unused, of energy frustrated by the huge Party machine. General Göring is reported to have said: "Had the Socialists put Mierendorff in the place where he belonged, we should not be where we are now." No doubt the Nazis considered, and apparently still consider, him as a dangerous enemy. Brave fighter that he was, he showed a sublime sang-froid in facing his opponents, and it is a marvel that he was not seriously hurt in the stormy electioneering campaigns when the Nazis used to throw beer-bottles and chairs at him.

He could have fled when the Nazis came into power. He stayed in Germany. He would not desert the masses in their defeat. He had to be on the run constantly, although there was no legal case whatever against him. In June, 1933, the Nazis caught him in Frankfurt. They took him to Darmstadt, where they led him through the streets in triumph. Eye-witnesses were deeply impressed by his dignified composure. He was imprisoned in Darmstadt, then brought to the concentration camp of Osthofen near Worms, then to the Börgermoor camp, then to the camp of Lichtenburg. Your readers may get an idea of what confinement in the two last-mentioned camps means, through Wolfgang Langhoff's book *Die Moor-Soldaten*. (An English edition was published by Constable's, under the title *The Rubber Truncheon*). Mierendorff was ill several times. He was taken to hospitals, only to be returned to the camp, after convalescence. For a considerable time nothing has been heard of him, and now there is an alarming rumour that he has disappeared, and that he cannot be traced by his friends.

As a journalist I wish to appeal, through your columns, Sir, to my confreres in Great Britain to give the widest possible publicity to this letter. And I earnestly hope that the British Legion, which has established friendly relations with the German authorities, will urgently ask them for the release of the disabled ex-combatant Carl Mierendorff, who not only has served his country in time of war, but has been a steadfast worker for peace and international collaboration. JOSEF HALPERIN

Oberengstringen, Switzerland.

Miscellany

NEW MUSIC

WHILE political partisans go on in the necessary turmoil of squabbling and contesting there is another kind of international comity and understanding being achieved, as in the past, by the non-political activity of artists. In the world of music in this country there is the great civilising force of the B.B.C., and of all the musical activities of the B.B.C. the most important ones are those of its public concerts devoted to the classics and to contemporary works of composers of all countries. At a luncheon given by the B.B.C. the other day, Dr. Adrian Boult announced an addition to their regular programme for this winter of three special concerts at the Queen's Hall, as follows: On Wednesday, December 11th, Purcell and Dryden's opera *King Arthur;* on February 5th, the distinguished French composer Darius Milhaud's opera, or oratorio, *Christopher Columbus*, which made a strong impression on the intelligent musical public in Berlin when it was performed some years ago, with the greatest respect and con-

scientious devotion, by M. Milhaud's German colleagues; and on March 18th, the young Russian composer Shostakovitch's opera *Lady Macbeth*, which has been the most important musical achievement in Russia of recent years. At this luncheon were present Herr Krenek, the distinguished young Viennese composer, some of whose music the B.B.C. has recently introduced at one of its contemporary music concerts, M. Darius Milhaud, and a number of English musicians and journalists. I am sure this luncheon did something to dispel the rather chilling social atmosphere which foreign musicians only too frequently find in our country, where we have not yet acquired an easy, gracious and cordial manner with visiting artists, however well disposed and friendly towards them we may all feel in our hearts. I would suggest to the B.B.C. that functions of this kind are of great social service, and that if they could become a regular feature of the B.B.C.'s work so that several times a year foreign musicians would have the opportunity of meeting their English colleagues it would be a surprise to them to find that even in England we have musicians whose outlook is not narrow, petty, provincial and jealous, but who are able to meet their most distinguished European contemporaries on an equal footing.

I forbear to mention the name of English musicians who are so qualified, but they do exist, and it is the business of the B.B.C. to help to bring them and their European colleagues together in the active musical life of our time.

As usual, however, with the B.B.C., there is a curiously apologetic tone adopted whenever they do anything really courageous, enlightened, and artistically fruitful. It is hard for the B.B.C. publicly to avow that its most important function is a cultural one, because it is surrounded by enemies who hate culture, tradition, art and every higher human activity and would like to turn the B.B.C. into a mere public entertainer on the lowest possible level provided this did not interfere with their own forms of entertaining the public. But every serious musician will admit that the B.B.C.'s work in preparing and presenting the compositions enumerated above, and all such activities, are simply invaluable.

Although, unfortunately, I did not hear Herr Krenek's compositions, several other new works of importance have recently been performed in London on which I have something to say. These are Mr. William Walton's completed first Symphony, performed at a B.B.C. concert under Sir Hamilton Harty; Herr Arnold Schönberg's Violoncello Concerto, played by Emmanuel Feuermann under Sir Thomas Beecham at a Royal Philharmonic Society concert; and Sir Donald Tovey's Violoncello Concerto in C major, played by Casals, with the composer conducting, at the Courtauld-Sargent concert this week. Sir Donald Tovey's Concerto is a long work in four movements, of which the first is the most extended. If one begins by making clear that this is not a work of great original genius, nor a work of a minor but original talent, then one can praise it with sincerity for many good qualities. It is exceedingly agreeable to hear and has a certain spontaneity and lack of dryness which is very unusual in the work of academic musicians. It is clearly the work of a lover and not merely an erudite scholar of music, and it abounds in the recognition of the inventions of musical genius in the past which may still escape the average music lover and even musician. In fact, the first movement is almost a history of the art of music from the time of Beethoven. Indeed, I think that music students, instead of having to listen to dull lectures on musical history, should hear such works as this performed in their School of Music by their own orchestra and then be invited to comment on the sources of all of Sir Donald Tovey's delightfully concrete erudition. To have erudition made concrete like this instead of being left abstract and theoretic is a most pleasing and instructive experience. Occasionally an individual expression is attained by Sir Donald, chiefly I think in the *Andante innocente* and in the Rondo, especially in its attractive conclusion. Casals played the work *con amore*, and it is a Concerto that I, for one, could hear again with much pleasure even if it were only to be set speculating again on whether Sir Donald is aware that he has used the theme of Berlioz's *Marche au Supplice* in his first movement and introduced it into the soloist's cadenza with a singularly appropriate effect which is all the more significant for the fact that it is an unconscious testimony to the affinity between Berlioz and Beethoven, seeing the markedly Beethovenish character of Tovey's Concerto.

Unlike most of my colleagues I thoroughly enjoyed Schönberg's Concerto, which turned out to be constructed on an old work for cembalo by Georg Matthias Monn (1717–1750). Schönberg has obviously retained Monn's melodic and often his rhythmic structure, but has woven into it his own harmonic thinking. In the slow movement *alla marcia* he has, in my opinion, constructed something really strange and beautiful—the Monn work has here suffered a time change and emerges encrusted with Schönbergian harmony as something rich and rare.

A hearing of Mr. Walton's completed symphony confirms the original impression that it is a serious work of talent, but I hope to hear Mr. Walton next time in a less positively strenuous mood. In this symphony he goes after music hell for leather, but I should like to hear music come to him—drop on him, as it were, unawares.

W. J. TURNER

ART AND DICTATORSHIP

THE scientist and the Christian cannot accept the Totalitarian State, because the unlimited allegiance which it claims is inconsistent with the unlimited allegiance which they owe to a different principle. The artist's case is similar, but commands less immediate assent, because he appeals not to the venerable concept of religious or scientific truth, but to an individualism which may appear wayward or even anti-social. Indeed, the poet must be extirpated in the ideal state according to Plato, who may be claimed as the first Fascist philosopher. And less rigid men often regard the artist as a harmless parasite, concerned only with rhymes or colour-schemes, while his fellows live in squalor or die of hunger. Yet when you have made a world fit for human beings to live in, art and the profound excitement to be derived from it will presumably be among the most solid satisfactions to be enjoyed in that world. If the society you wish to create results merely in everyone employing leisure in the way most of the rich now employ it, that society is little worth creating. And this, not on moral grounds, because their pleasures are ignoble, but on utilitarian grounds, because their pleasures do not give them satisfaction.

If a society needs good art, the artist also needs a good society. And the only test of a good society, I suggest, is the extent to which it promotes the well-being of the individuals composing it. At present artists, and particularly painters, suffer because they depend for moral and material support upon a small fraction of the community: nine-tenths of their potential public are lost to them. They suffer more seriously still in other ways—the chaotic, distracted, terrified world in which they now live affords little tranquillity in which to recollect emotion. A very great genius may be able to live on himself, the general race of artists require some security in their environment. It is hardly conducive to good art for the artist to know that next year he may be flogged in a concentration camp, or lose his eyes in a war.

In point of fact art is one of the first activities to suffer from a Fascist revolution. In Germany almost every painter or architect with any serious reputation has been the object of official attack: Gropius and Mendelsohn and Paul Klee are in exile, and old Liebermann luckily died before he had received physical injury. Knowing this, artists in this country have organised an exhibition as a protest against Fascism and War. And Aldous Huxley has written for the exhibition a foreword from which four sentences specially deserve quotation:

> Good ends never justify bad means, for the simple reason that, in the process of being used, the bad means change the good ends, so that what in fact is reached is not the goal originally proposed, but some other and worse goal. Good ends, on the whole, are less

important than good means. If the means are good, the end reached also will be good. This truth is constantly being illustrated in the arts.

He ends with a comparison between the passive obedience demanded by the dictator and self-discipline necessarily practised by the artist, who in this respect is " a special case of the good citizen." The catalogue also includes a manifesto of the Artists' International Association, pointing out that Fascism inevitably means war as well as the loss of liberty, and that it is the interest as well as the duty of intellectuals to play their part in resisting it.

The works exhibited represent a variety of schools. Eric Gill, Duncan Grant, Augustus John, Laura Knight, Henry Moore and Paul Nash are the committee responsible for the show; and Signac, Léger and Lhote are among the Frenchmen represented. The propagandist works include caricatures by Ernst Stocker and horrifying drawings by two artists who have been in German concentration-camps. Miss Betty Rea, who has done more than anyone to make the exhibition possible, shows a most distinguished carved figure which proves that she can organise forms as well as exhibitions. Miss E. B. S. Sprigge also shows good sculptures. The gallery is at 28, Soho Square, and is well worth visiting for the wide representation of contemporary English work.

Another large mixed exhibition is that of the London Group at the New Burlington Galleries. Here there is great variety and a new liveliness. The London Group used to be too much taken up with painstaking attempts to totter in the footsteps of Cézanne, but this year Mr. Claude Rogers is almost alone in offering us those familiar pears. I regret to say that the two best pictures are by Vanessa Bell—I regret it because one would have liked to welcome some startling and unrecognised talent. Gertler's *Conversation* is the best and most pleasing picture of his that I have seen for years. Victor Pasmore, John Maxwell and Eleanor Bellingham Smith seem to me among the most promising of the younger painters. Rodrigo Moynihan and Geoffrey Tibble show paintings which consist of nothing but *matière*—the doctrine of paint for paint's sake carried to a logical and, I think, absurd conclusion. " Is there any reason why I should not? " the artists may ask. But it would, I suggest, be more pertinent if they asked themselves " Is there any reason why I should? " The inability to distinguish between these two questions seems to me responsible for much talent being wasted on exploring blind alleys. The most interesting works at the London Group, I think, are the two pieces of Stephen Tomlin's sculpture. The bust of a child is entirely delightful, and the great garden figure, though it cannot properly be seen in a gallery, is expressive, deeply considered and noble.

To conclude this article I wish to quote some inspiring words which are upon a wall at the anti-Fascist Exhibition. They come from a Nazi newspaper, the *Völkischer Beobachter*, and they are full of promise to artists and to all who care for art in every country: " *So long as there remains in Germany any unpolitical, neutral or individualistic art, our task is not ended.*"

RAYMOND MORTIMER

BARON ALOISI

HE is a diplomat of long experience, both in Europe and the Far East. Polished, suave, cultured, imperturbable, he belongs to a type well known in his profession. In the political field he has no particular convictions; like all who serve a dictator the necessity of obedience has brought out in him an amused cynicism which is his protective armour against the awkward claims of principle. He has served Mussolini since the foundation of the Fascist State; and he has survived through all the vagaries of his master. Like Siéyès in the French Revolution, he would take his survival as a sufficient justification of his behaviour.

Baron Aloisi is an able man. In his job he has competence, shrewdness, insight. Deliberately, he has put aside all values save those, the acceptance of which enables him to survive. To his master, his justification is the simple one that no one could carry out his orders more efficiently; to his Italian critics, the exiles, for instance, he can affirm that, like a good civil servant, it is not his business to question his orders, but to obey them.

What is his justification to himself? Baron Aloisi is much too able and experienced a man to be deceived by the arguments he is compelled to put forward. The answer, one imagines, is twofold. In part, he is not the man, granted his cynicism of mind, to ask himself inconvenient questions. In part, he would argue that he is a realist who, like Machiavelli or La Rochefoucauld, strips the mask of pretentious virtue from human behaviour and acts in terms of the real motives of men. He has his compensations—a nice taste in art, especially of the Far East (he was at Tokio for some years)—and a pleasant taste in letters. He has comfort and high place instead of the exile's twilight world in Paris or London. If he did not serve Mussolini some one else would, and most likely with far less ability. The Baron is not unaware of his qualities as a virtuoso.

He is an interesting example of what happens to the able man who serves a dictator of Mussolini's kind. He has to please. To please means the suppression of one's own thoughts, to convince the dictator of one's own competence by expressing his ideas with appropriate adulation; to steer clear of the little devil doubt which may drop the dangerous word a rival so easily turns to one's disadvantage. Baron Aloisi has done this now for half a generation; it has become part of his inner consciousness. He has begun to act a part so successfully that the natural man has disappeared. What is left is a skilful player who repeats his author's lines without regard to the quality of the drama, and finds his compensation, in part, in the sheer pleasure of his own elocution, and in part in the half-convinced belief that the play would go badly without him.

The exponents of power-politics all, sooner or later, become habituated to the medium in which they operate. In pre-Fascist Italy Baron Aloisi would have been a cultivated man of the world, a good deal of whose enjoyment would have come from association with the best intelligence of Europe. He would have had the reputation of a Cambon. As it is, the necessity of surviving in the service of a dictator means the replacement of the avenues and impulses he would have wished to explore by a journey through others in which he is never himself. He knows how perilously he is poised on a steep equilibrium. An incautious word, a single failure, an inadequate eulogy, the absence of the proper note of conviction when he speaks—any of these may be his downfall. He would not be the apt pupil of Machiavelli that he is if he did not find a certain pleasure in his own difficulties. He is acutely aware of them. But he is too completely now the man of the world to think of sacrifice for high principle as a luxury the diplomat can afford. His grim penalty is to have formed himself in his master's own image. *Corruptio optimi pessima* is true of him as of all servants of an autocracy.

LEAGUE PERSONALITIES

This week's Kapp is a study of Baron Aloisi, taken from his notebooks; next week we hope to reproduce a similar study of M. Litvinoff. The following week we return to supplement form and hope to reproduce Kapp's portraits of M. Benes, Lord Cecil, Herr Goebbels and the Aga Khan.

Twenty sets only have been made by Kapp of the twenty-five original lithograph portraits planned for the British Museum and National Portrait Gallery—each plate being signed and numbered. A few of these plates are available for purchase through the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION or the Leicester Galleries, Leicester Square (where the complete series can be seen) at 5 guineas each—or 75 guineas for the complete set of twenty-five portraits.

Study for Baron Aloisi
Kupfr. Geneva. '35

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Anthony and Anna," at the Whitehall Theatre

This charmingly unmoral little play provides a pleasant enough evening's entertainment, except for a rather dragging last act. Mr. Ervine, who has so often driven his drawing-pin into his brother-playwrights' behinds for not learning their jobs, shows that he has always had every right to do so. Neat, efficient, witty, he carries off his threadbare plot with the aplomb we expect of him. He is well served by his cast and by his producer, Miss Irene Hentschel, who showed in her production of *Close Quarters* how to make the best of good material. The evening goes to Miss Tandy (Anna) and not to Anthony, the charm-monger (Mr. Harold Warrender), though Mr. Warrender's quiet methods served him well in a part, which might easily have become embarrassing with less attractive handling. But Miss Tandy's brilliant mood, her infectious personality and her delightful appearance—it is a relief to see a leading actress, who is a *jolie laide*—levelled the walls of Jericho on the other side of the footlights at her first blast; incidentally, she gives the best version of an American accent heard from an English actress for a long time. Mr. Morris Harvey as her father would do better not to attempt one at all, but his characteristically dry humour is well-suited to the dyspeptic millionaire and he adds his own particular weight to the balance of the play. Both the servants of the Inn are admirably acted, in particular Fred, the boy, charmingly done by Mr. Tom Gill. Mr. Gill, who looks, and apparently is, about seventeen, has all the makings of a first-class actor, if he doesn't turn out to be a flash in the pan. He has the real actor's gift of seeming to be the character he is playing, and every turn of the shoulder, every shuffle of the foot is what it ought to be. A pleasant evening in more ways than one, and if Mr. Ervine will ginger up his last scene a bit his play should have a considerable success.

"Tread Softly," at Daly's

The first two acts of this play are probably the best and most accomplished light entertainment that London playgoers have seen in years—an enchantment of delicately pointed dialogue, effortless, smooth and scintillating, delivered with such perfection and polish as rarely falls to the lot of dramatic authorship. But in the third act Mr. Peter Traill, whose sense of the superficial humours of character is often admirable, shows a certain amateurishness. Light comedy cannot be topped off with a serious situation, just because the probabilities, so charmingly kept at bay for so long, begin to assert themselves in the author's mind. It is as though an accomplished juggler should, for his finale, suddenly bring the cue and billiard-balls down from mid-air and practise desultory cannons on the nearby table. It will not do, and the play sags and droops woefully before the curtain falls. But there remains the memory of Mr. Squire, subtly sending a raw young man off on a Mediterranean cruise by urging him not to go; of Mr. Squire, intent on saving the same young man from the widowly wiles of Miss Arnaud, slipping insensibly into an attraction, deliciously plunging, and sadly realising his years and responsibilities immediately afterwards; and of Miss Arnaud, whose voice bejewels each line she speaks, whose shoulders are oracular, whose very eyebrows conduct a flirtation in undertones.

"Moscow Nights," at the Leicester Square

This is the most enjoyable and distinguished British film which we have seen. The story is a miserable old-fashioned affair about a handsome young officer who loses at baccarat money which he has not got, and who is then court-martialled for treachery which he has not committed. But these deadly dusty dry bones have been made to live by remarkable directing and acting. Mr. Henry Baur as a profiteer gives a formidable performance in the grand manner—really big acting such as one used to get from Lucien Guitry and Chaliapin. Mr. Laurence Olivier, with his stunning good looks is polished, moving, and most pleasantly ironical. Miss Athene Seyler as a spy has here overcome her occasional tendency to overact and leaves us dissatisfied only because we do not have more of her. Miss Penelope Dudley Ward is a lovely, but among three such brilliant *virtuosi* she cannot help looking rather helpless and unequipped. The sets are not only sumptuous but elegant and convincing: the photography is continually interesting, and in the outdoor scenes there is a marvellous light, which gives the illusion of the wide Russian skies. Mr. Anthony Asquith, with a story far weaker than that of *The Man who Knew Too Much*, has made a much more interesting film. He is now a master of his medium; this film shows his gift for getting the best out of his actors; in fact, his proved abilities entitle him to be regarded as the most effective and accomplished director which this country has produced.

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THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, November 15th—
- 1935 Exhibition against War and Fascism, 28, Soho Square, 11—8.30. Open till November 27th, including Sundays.
- Mrs. Barbara Drake on "The School Child," Fabian Common Rooms, 11, Dartmouth Street, 5.30.
- Dora Russell on "Education To-day," Conway Hall, 7.30.

SATURDAY, November 16th—
- Children's Film Society. Everyman Cinema Theatre, Hampstead.

SUNDAY, November 17th—
- John Katz on "The Intelligentsia To-day," Conway Hall, 11.
- John Strachey on "What Should Socialists Do Now?" Marx House, Clerkenwell Green, 7.30.
- Left Theatre Production of "Mother," Phoenix Theatre.
- "Little Tsar," Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith.

MONDAY, November 18th—
- "Avalanche," Everyman Cinema, Hampstead.
- London Symphony Orchestra (Ronald), Queen's Hall, 8.15.

TUESDAY, November 19th—
- British Chrysanthemum Show, Old Horticultural Hall.
- Leonard G. Montefiore on "The Jews in Germany," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
- J. V. Quilliam on "Voluntary Sterilisation—Work of the Last Two Years," Rooms of the Linnean Society, Burlington House, 5.15.
- S. K. Ratcliffe on "The Menace of a New Dark Age," Conway Hall, 7.
- Somerville Hastings on "Public Health," Morley College, 8.
- "Timon of Athens," Westminster Theatre.

THURSDAY, November 21st—
- Royal Philharmonic Society (Harty), Queen's Hall, 8.15.
- Mrs. Barbara Wootton on "A Critique of Soviet Planning," Friends Hall, Euston Road, 8.30.
- "The Inside Stand," Saville Theatre.

FRIDAY, November 22nd—
- S. Vinogradoff on "The Contribution of the U.S.S.R. to Civilisation," Royal Society of Arts, John Street, Adelphi, 8.15.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

The Correspondence of Thomas Gray (three volumes, Oxford Press, 63s.), which has now been published in a definitive form, is naturally very largely concerned with University life at Cambridge; it is therefore fortunate that the late Mr. Paget Toynbee should have had the collaboration of Mr. Leonard Whibley as editor. Mr. Whibley has written all the notes and appendices referring to Cambridge, has revised the whole work and seen it through the press. Though projected by Toynbee, the edition is therefore largely Whibley's work. While there are only twenty-six new letters in a total of 500, there is much new material in the appendices and elsewhere. The maddening feature of Gray's correspondence is that it was mutilated and castrated by the ever-to-be-abhorred Scroddles, the Reverend William Mason, Gray's intimate friend and the first editor of his letters. Not content with Bowdlerising what he printed, Mason snipped the actual letters full of holes with his pocket scissors and tried to have many of the originals destroyed. Some great poets have little of importance to hide; one can understand them from their poetry. This is not the case with Gray and it is disastrous that he should have suffered this Moorish preferment. The Bowdlerising was done in a particularly heartless manner—for example, Mason attempted to obliterate every mention of Tuthill, a most intimate friend whose disgrace cast a shade of melancholy over Gray's later years. In many cases, not content with such suppressions, Mason ran two or more letters together and misdated the final concoction. The present editors have disentangled Mason's criminal proceedings with a pertinacity that would make bloodhounds hang their heads with shame, but they cannot reconstruct the things we most want to know. In what language, for example, did Gray lament his friend's disaster? Did he correspond with him, or did he help to support him as Mr. Whibley suggests? Scroddles has cut it out. It is perhaps ungrateful to complain of the indexes in this sumptuous edition—but there are too many. I, Thomas Gray. II, Other Persons. III, Authors and Books. IV, Places. But where does one find again the pet owl "as like me as he can stare, except that I don't eat (mice?) and bite people's fingers."

* * *

The son of a London scrivener, Gray had the good fortune to be sent to Eton where two of his uncles were tutors: he there formed a passionate friendship with Horace Walpole the son of the Prime Minister. When Gray had been at Cambridge for three years, Horace Walpole took him, paying his expenses, for a tour on the Continent lasting two years. Finally Walpole behaved badly, they quarrelled and Gray came home alone, but their friendship was afterwards renewed and lasted until Gray's death. On his return Gray went back to Cambridge where he remained for the rest of his life, during which he became the most famous poet and one of the most learned men in England. At one moment it seemed that he might marry. Miss Henrietta Speed loved him, she was intelligent and vivacious and had £30,000—but Gray preferred to remain a bachelor. It seems unlikely that if we exclude his first gay adoration of Horace Walpole, Gray was ever in love until eighteen months before his death. The early letters to Walpole, written while Gray was an undergraduate at Peterhouse, before their tour, have been called silly in a recent addition to the *Great Lives* series, *Thomas Gray* by R. W. Ketton-Cremer (Duckworth, 2s.), but this is a harsh judgment. They are delightfully witty and entertaining and breathe out, not too sentimentally, a charming and a deep affection. Gray's wit is the first thing to attract one in his letters. Thus he hits off English politics brilliantly in a sentence which has never been truer than it is this week: "even a Victory at this time would be look'd upon as a wicked attempt to please the Nation."

But it is Gray's warmth that is most attractive. Thus when Walpole half confided a youthful love affair with his cousin Anne Seymour Conway, Gray wrote of love as "the most excellent of the sciences," and ended his letter:

> Bear I was born, and Bear, I believe, I am likely to remain; consequently a little ungainly in my fondnesses, but I'll be bold to say, you shan't in a hurry meet with a more loving poor animal than Your faithful Creature, Bruin.

* * *

Gray's life was spent with the most desiccated species of mankind—the Cambridge don, which he describes thus on his arrival from Eton:

> The Masters of Colledges are twelve grey-haired Gentlefolks, who are all mad with Pride; the Fellows are sleepy, drunken, dull, illiterate Things; the Fellow-Com: are imitators of the Fellows, or else Beaux, or else nothing; . . . the Sizers are Graziers Eldest Sons, who come to get good learning, that they may all be Archbishops of Canterbury.

This lively picture which is strikingly borne out by an illiterate letter from his tutor, compares well with the account which his friend West gives of Oxford, where he finds himself

> in a strange country, inhabited by things that call themselves Doctors and Masters of Arts, a country flowing with syllogisms and ale, where Horace and Virgil are equally unknown.

Seventeen years later the syllogisms had disappeared and Gibbon found nothing but the ale. Gray's mockery of Cambridge does not approach Gibbon's indictment of Oxford because he accepted the dons' outlook. Undergraduates were required, not because education was the function of the University, but to recruit a supply of monastic dons.

> There is no making bricks without straw; they now have no Boys at all and unless you can send us a Hamper or two out of the North to begin with, they will be like a few Rats straggling about an old deserted Mansion-House.

The young men were hearty and noisy and were responsible for ragging Gray with an alarm of fire which gave him an excuse to remove himself from Peterhouse to the more congenial atmosphere of Pembroke. On other occasions the fellow-commoners run mad and set women on their heads, while young Mr. Delaval "has had a little misfortune"—his rooms being searched for a spirited girl Nell Burnet, who had been staying in his rooms and going about with him dressed as an officer. Such disturbances were superficial; the real life was that of the Fellows and Masters in whose intrigues and cabals Gray played a large share.

* * *

Such was the life of the "little waddling freshman of Peterhouse" as he described himself, who grew in time to be a spinsterish Professor of Modern History who never gave a single lecture. But he wrote the most beautiful, and the most hackneyed, poem in English and was also a most profoundly original poet. Gray was the forerunner of Blake and almost every line in *The Bard* informs us of a strange affinity.

> The bristled Boar in infant gore
> Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
> Now, Brothers, bending o'er th'accursed loom
> Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

* * *

It is deeply significant that Blake should have chosen to illustrate and should quote, in his *Descriptive Catalogue*, the very lines of *The Bard* which Doctor Johnson had selected to quote in order to belittle Gray. The perfection of the *Elegy* disguises the fact that Gray was one of the most revolutionary of English poets. After seeing some of the criticisms of *The Bard* he wrote: "the next thing that I write shall be in Welch, that's all." It showed itself not only in poetry that puzzled his contemporaries, but in his interests. He hankered after Welsh legends, and Scandinavian sagas, loved Ossian and went off to explore Grasmere, Ambleside and Keswick half a century too soon. He was, however, by no means revolutionary in his politics; he detested atheism; a belief in a personal deity was no doubt essential to his existence. He can never forget his hatred of Voltaire and he regrets that Hume should have learned to read and write, so it was perhaps fortunate that he was spared reading *The Decline and Fall.*

But his literary judgment was otherwise admirable. He praises Rousseau's *Emile* while he damns *La Nouvelle Héloise* and he rebukes a correspondent thus:

> I don't know what to say with regard to Racine: it sounds to me as if anybody should fall upon Shakespeare, who indeed lies infinitely more open to criticism of all kinds, but I should not care to be the person that undertook it. If you don't like Athaliah or Britannicus there is no more to be said.

* * *

Poetry, literature, college life, the affection of dearly loved old friends and a fussy pursuit of knowledge, filled up a life which I can see no reason to regard as gloomy. Indeed Gray was happy until the terrible day when he met and fell in love with the fleeting, adorable Charles Victor de Bonstettin. There were a few months of demented happiness—showing Bonstettin *Macbeth*—"witches, Beldams, Ghosts and Spirits, whose language I never could have understood without his interpretation," while Gray raved to his friends: "I never saw such a boy: our breed is not made on this model. He is busy from morning to night, has no other amusement than that of changing one study for another." Then Bonstettin departed and Gray was left to write:

> *Ce n'est pas le voir de s'en souvenir*, and yet that remembrance is the only satisfaction I have left. My life now is but a perpetual conversation with your shadow. The known sound of your voice still rings in my ears. There on the corner of the fender you are standing, or tinkling on the pianoforte, or stretched at length on the sofa.

Such a doomed, unhappy love, coming with overpowering force upon such a poet as Gray, when he was over fifty, is as much to be pitied, and needs as much sympathy as all the broken hearts of young Keatses for their Fanny Brawnes. He gets less. Sixty years later Bonstettin showed that he understood:

> Je crois que Gray n'avait jamais aimé.

DAVID GARNETT

LORD CHESTERFIELD

Lord Chesterfield. By SAMUEL SHELLABARGER. *Macmillan.* 15*s.*

Everyone who allows the sense of the past a certain play in their lives comes sooner or later to adopt a special period, to fall in love with a few decades of history which they cannot read about without a kind of quickening; an interior voice affirming "This was the time." For many people this is the Elizabethan period, for others the seventeenth century, the Regency, or the reign of Charles II. For me it is the first half of the eighteenth century and the few years before it: the end of Dryden, the flowering of Congreve and Pope, the beginnings of Horace Walpole and Selwyn, a transitional age full of a certain beautiful clumsiness such as is found in the interiors of Hogarth and the furniture of William Kent. Compared with it the seventeenth century seems too eccentric and theological, the high eighteenth century too romantic, too elegant, and above all too rich, and the Regency frankly vulgar. Unless you share this feeling (which is so prominent in the editors of Lord Hervey's memoirs, the Duke of Newcastle's papers, or in Thackeray's *English Humourists*), it seems a pity to write a life of one of the central figures. Above all it is no place for the religious, for it represents the first flowering in English life of the Roman spirit, with its urbanity, good sense, and stoical courage, the first reasonable, measured, intelligent attack on the citadel of happiness which the Augustans launched, after impregnating themselves with the spirit of Horace, the city-bred sophistication of Martial and Juvenal, the solid qualities of the pagan world rather than the Renaissance's wild adaptation of them.

But Professor Shellabarger, on religious grounds, disapproves of Chesterfield categorically—"under the pagan dispensation his rank would be high; judged by the real not the conventional Christian practice, he would have no rank at all."

> "I feel the beginning of autumn," writes the dying Chesterfield, "which is already very cold. The leaves are withered, fall apace, and seem to intimate that I must follow them; which I shall do without reluctance, being extremely weary of this silly world."
>
> One cannot help recalling, in contrast to this bleak acquiescence [comments Professor Shellabarger], the humble faith with which Johnson met his death some years later, or the exultant joy of Wesley's final hours in the bare little room near City Road.
>
> Chesterfield is perhaps to be pitied rather than blamed . . . . [for not becoming a Wesleyan!] . . . Thesmile of a Marivaux or a Chesterfield may be one of life's greatest tragedies.

He even blames all Chesterfield's older friends, "gentleman Congreve ashamed to be thought a writer," Marlborough ("what grace! it secured him the favour of Lady Castlemaine and a tip of five thousand pounds"), Lord Peterborough ("a comic hero . . . a philanderer to the day of his death"), Bolingbroke, Vanbrugh: all are considered the worst possible influences, while meanwhile:

> In Dartmouth, on Lower Street, a very low fellow, indeed a microscopic fellow from the standpoint of St. James, was tinkering in those days on a mad device for pumping water by fire out of mine pits. It was a blacksmith called Newcomen. . . . About this time, too, was born at a poverty-stricken rectory in Lincolnshire a boy who had as few and as poor expectations as Philip Stanhope had great ones. . . And yet he would change the course of English history, etc.

Wesley, of course, again.

Granted that the author disapproves of Chesterfield, he has written a very interesting book about him, for he is intelligent enough to see that Chesterfield's life represents, as it were, the second line of defence of paganism, just as Rochester's, for instance, is the front line which apologists find almost too hot to hold and which they have often to evacuate. The cyrenaicism of Rochester killed him in his thirties, the mellow stoicism of Chesterfield secured him happiness till he was eighty. Even Professor Shellabarger can only find a small measure of misfortune in the long life of one who, despite gambling, was always rich; despite ugliness was always favoured; despite wit was popular; despite political quarrels was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Secretary of State, and Knight of the Garter; was famous in three countries on the strength of a few essays, and joked about death when Johnson "with his humble faith" was sweating with fear at the mention of it. Even Chesterfield's deafness I doubt to be the major calamity which the Professor would have us believe. "I make the most of everything I can," he wrote, and it would be hard to discover a more satisfactory recipe for a happy old age.

The truth is that Chesterfield was extraordinarily tough. Swift wrote of his "âme endurcie" and the Earl went through life almost without love and almost without friends quite complacently. It is his one lapse, his one love-affair that has made him famous, and which is dealt with in by far the best section of this book—"The Ordeal of Philip Stanhope." For though Chesterfield lives as a type of Whig aristocrat, as a master of delicate prose, as a father he is a world-character, a person on whom the predicament of paternity has been worked out to its most relentless conclusion.

> I have now but one anxiety left, which is concerning you. I would have you be, what I know nobody is, perfect. As that is impossible, I would have you as near perfection as possible. I know nobody in a fairer way towards it than yourself, if you please. Never were so much pains taken for anybody's education as for yours; and never had anybody those opportunities of knowledge and improvement which you have had and still have. I hope, I wish, I doubt, and I fear alternately. This only I am sure of, that you will prove either the greatest pain, or the greatest pleasure of
>
> Yours.

Anyone who receives such a letter is in for it, and so is anyone who writes it; for to call in the new generation to redress the balance of the old, to exact from your children the success that you have missed yourself or the love that your contemporaries have not been able to give, is the most pathetic of all ways of making everyone unhappy. As a father Chesterfield is tremendous. The lesson to be learnt from him far outweighs in importance anything Wesley could teach, and still few people have learnt it. We see him pushing, moulding, lecturing, spying, piling up the jam round the pill, yet never leaving alone for a moment the miserable little creature whom he has cast to re-enact his own youth for him.

As Professor Shellabarger points out, "The casual reader, dipping here and there into the *Letters*, will be charmed by the Earl's gentleness. It is only when the collection is read consecutively and as a whole that the relentless character of the system becomes apparent."

Eventually the son returns home, having been everywhere, done everything and met everyone that his father had. His father waits at Blackheath, for the "rattle of hooves and wheels up the Dover Road."

> At last it came—unmistakable. His son, the hero of his dreams, a figment, indeed, of thought rather than a reality, was at the door—it had been five years. He had last seen Philip as a child, and did not know the young man arriving from Dover in the post-chaise. The child had grown into what? . . .

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GOLLANCZ 14 HENRIETTA STREET COVENT GARDEN

A gasp, hardly suppressed, answers that question.

It is interesting to think that another experiment in education was taking place at the same time by a father who could say, as he watched his son break his gold watch, "Well, if you must, you must," and "Let nothing be done to break his spirit, the world will accomplish that business soon enough"—and interesting to see how Lord Holland was rewarded.

The author continues with a further account of Philip Stanhope, his failure in Parliament, his secret marriage, how he stuffed the corner of the tablecloth in his waistcoat in mistake for his napkin, and walked across the floor pulling down after him the whole service during a grand dinner at Chesterfield House. He concludes with an admirable analysis of the *Letters* and their popularity, though again his attitude is unsympathetic. Of Chesterfield's suggestion that his son should have an affair with a married woman of the Faubourg, he writes: "The abscess suppurates at this point."

It is a pity that Professor Shellabarger does not devote more space to an analysis of the style of the *Letters*, a man who could write such a phrase as "Cunning is the dark sanctuary of incapacity" deserves something more than purely moral criticism, and he is hard also on the famous poem to Lady Hervey, saying "his rather lame muse burst into doggerel"—yet it is better than doggerel. The clumsy freshness appears again:

> Had I Hanover, Bremen and Verden,
> And also the Duchy of Zell,
> I would part with them all for a farthing
> To enjoy my dear Molly Lepel.

If you are going to write about men of the world I think you ought to like the world, but apart from this, there is much that is interesting, understanding and well put in this biography which has, indeed, a certain mournful epigraphic quality, appearing at a time when we seem about to bid a final farewell to the life of reason, and in a year that has witnessed the demolition of Chesterfield House, and the extinction of the Earls of Chesterfield.

CYRIL CONNOLLY

TOTEM

Totem: The Exploitation of Youth. By HAROLD STOVIN. *Methuen.* 5s.

An intelligent person can live his life in England and never be aware of a large number of organisations squandering their time and energy in building up a system of myth designed to insulate its believers from all forms of reality. Of course, it is impossible not to hear of the Scout Movement, not to see the fantastic architecture of the Tottenham Court Road Y.M.C.A., not to read about the activities of Toc H Marks, not to be aware of the Prince of Wales's exhortations to all the various groups of people vigorously engaged in Service of some kind or another, but it is possible to be quite unaware of what all these things mean, of their full and sinister significance. And this is where Mr. Stovin comes in. If this were *New York News* I should say that he had ripped the lid off all Youth and Service associations; as it is I can say that he has very excellently demonstrated the subtle viciousness of all groupings of people founded upon a purely emotional basis.

Totem is not a particularly well-designed book. Mr. Stovin's discussion of the housing problem has no relevance to his thesis and would sound much better before a Government Commission. Yet, as a whole, the book is sound, in spite of the many paragraphs that will keep straying aside from the main path of the argument. The point it makes is that magic is to-day being used as a substitute for the real art of living, that a ritualistic and tribal technique for coping with experience is being developed in place of a rational, civilised one. And the blame for this Mr. Stovin lays on to the work of Baden-Powell, Sir Arthur Yapp, "Tubby" Clayton, and Frank Buchman. Mr. Stovin, in my eyes, is perfectly and obviously right. I believe, with him, that in England there are to-day several large-scale movements carefully designed to foster the Group Mind, Team Work, and Good Fellowship—an unholy trinity boding ill to all endeavours at sensitive and intelligent living. I believed that long before I read his book—from, as a matter of fact, that moment, now some years ago, when a young man urged me to join the local Y.M.C.A. on the grounds of the extraordinary cleanliness of the fun enjoyed by the chaps and fellows already within its crimson triangle.

But I am delighted to have my belief strengthened by fresh proof, complete with chapter and verse. And I enjoy having it made plain that in England masses of people, apparently miles removed from Fascism, live, move and have their being amid ideals pretty nearly the same as those animating the German Youth Movement.

The proof lies everywhere. But I thank God that Mr. Stovin has had to read through it instead of me. I admire the toughness of his stomach. There is, for example, the tacit eulogy of National Socialism printed in a 1933 number of *The Boy*; and Baden-Powell's

> Every group has its own scarf colour, and as the honour of your group is bound up in the scarf you must be very careful to keep it clean and tidy;

a choice piece of versification limning the ideal young man—

> He'll look without dread at the snags on ahead
> Wine, Women and Highbrows too;
> He won't run aground but will work his way round,
> With a smile, in his own canoe;

the Toc H Journal's description of Toc H's eighteenth birthday festival at the Albert Hall:

> It is always a great moment in the life of a unit when the Lamp is first lit. . . . And now the Lighting was done. A wall of little living golden fires hedged in the platform round about. The Prince [of Wales] rose to his feet as the organ grew to a climax and led into the first two verses of the Hymn of Light, then electric lights all over the Hall died down to darkness. Everyone in the huge crater of the Albert Hall was on his feet, tense and motionless. The word of command from Tubby—"Light!" the familiar words; the silence of 6,000; the eager response—"and glorify our Father which is in Heaven," and the final great crash of the last verse of the Hymn of Life.

And there are many pages of stuff like this—with the Chief Scout extolling Zulu methods of education, Tubby Clayton working himself up over "the sheer devilry of being alone with God," and the Prince of Wales announcing that "there is no remedy which will ever replace the way of Fellowship."

After the first shock of wonder and amusement they make depressing reading. For the strength of their appeal is so apparent. Take the ordinary, semi-educated young man—the clerky type. The girls he meets allow him an occasional cuddle, but rarely anything else. He's not enough money to enjoy what he thinks are the real pleasures of life. So, left to himself, he feels out of the swim. And, having no internal resources, that upsets him. Then along comes an organisation which tells him that getting together with other young men is about the grandest thing in life, that his sex-starvation is Purity, that his lack of money and position is Humility, and that he'll find true happiness via community singing and organised games with a dash of praying thrown in for variety. Do you wonder that he falls for it? And thus, as Mr. Stovin says, is the world made safe for senility.

I wish he had gone on to point out remedies for this state of affairs. He tries to in his last chapter, but not very successfully. Not that his failure in this is really important, for his book is primarily a handbook of reference—a product of much research into the manifestations of present-day hysteria in England. It is more a piece of valuable scholarship than a piece of creative thinking.

JOHN BEEVERS

GAUDY NIGHT

Gaudy Night. By DOROTHY L. SAYERS. *Gollancz.* 8s. 6d.
Heir Presumptive. By HENRY WADE. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.
The Clue of the Rising Moon. By VALENTINE WILLIAMS. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 7s. 6d.
The Tinkling Symbol. By PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
The Shadow on the Downs. By R. C. WOODTHORPE. *Ivor Nicholson and Watson.* 7s. 6d.

For years Miss Sayers' admirers have been kept waiting for her next book. Some nine months ago, Messrs. Gollancz announced a future addition to the Wimsey family; and now, in very human shape, *Gaudy Night* comes to light. So devastatingly human, indeed, is its appeal that it hardly befits a callous reviewer of detective stories to criticise its dimples or investigate its parentage. Nevertheless, seeing that Miss Sayers did once write very good detective stories and that the publisher is handing it out as "a novel not without detection," I shall not hesitate to do my duty.

Let us begin with the pedigree of this imposing tome (for it is 483 pages long, costs 8s. 6d., and will be thought well worth the money by all the girls at Somerville and Lady Margaret Hall).

In *The Nine Tailors* and even as far back as *Murder Must Advertise*, you had been warned that Miss Sayers was approaching a dangerous cross-roads. The path of glory leading but to the grave along which she had been proceeding, showed signs of being intersected by the long, long trail a-winding into the land of her dreams. Lord Peter scored rather too fast for comfort in the famous cricket match in *Murder Must Advertise ;* and what with ringing that phenomenal peal of bells and saving the beautiful fen country from the worst horrors of inundation he had hardly time to find the body and solve the murder in *The Nine Tailors*. Miss Sayers' heart was no longer entirely in her original work. She was beginning to show great talents and still greater inclination for writing novels instead of detective stories—and novels of the particularly successful type in which acute observation and a ready mastery of the dialogue of every-day life are exploited to gain credence for a set of purely day-dream characters and conclusions. There is no element of surprise, therefore, in this new departure of Miss Sayers. Where the roads crossed she has taken a sharp turn, not right but left, and downhill at that—*facilis descensus Averni*—into those luscious lanes frequented by constant nymphs, autumn crocuses, and little boys who never grow up. And I, for one, shall leave her there with the utmost regret. It is no place in my opinion for the authoress of *Unnatural Death* and *Clouds of Witness*.

The words on the dust cover of *Gaudy Night*, "a novel—not without detection," betray a desire in the publishers to make the best of both worlds, but the suggestion of a litotes where there is no justification for one is bound to arouse hostile criticism in any one who is misled. The book, it must be admitted, is not utterly destitute of a detective element, since a lunatic who keeps on sending scurrilous letters to the members of a women's college at Oxford and perpetrating freakish acts of annoyance on them is at last tactfully identified and gently relegated for medical treatment. But the body of the story is just an Oxford halo encircling the love affair of Miss Harriet Vane and Lord Peter Wimsey. Some of us wondered why Miss Sayers deprived Lord Peter of Harriet five years ago for no apparent reason. The answer is *Gaudy Night*. No words of mine will do justice to the juiciness of this protracted surrender of emancipated womanhood to that brilliant scion of the peerage. And the fun in the Women's Senior Common Room ! The female donnish merriment about the dress shirts of visiting male dons ! Amidst such a plenitude of local knowledge as Miss Sayers reveals, spiced with all kinds of topical references and Latin tags, it gave me a certain unworthy satisfaction to catch her sending one of her aristocrat friends to "Christ Church College."

The psycho-analysts are better qualified than a mere reviewer to draw attention to the seamy side of this idyll. But the data about the heroine—Miss Harriet Vane is (1) an Oxford M.A., (2) a highly successful detective authoress and reviewer, (3) a believer in putting episodes from real life into her novels, and (4) persuaded by Lord Peter "to abandon the jig-saw kind of story and write a book about human beings for a change"—seem "not without" a dreary significance.

Heir Presumptive also carries a tendentious dust cover, but in compensation is sub-titled "a murder story," which is exactly what it is. These "Malice Aforethought" books can be extremely dull ; but those who read *The Verdict of You All* know that Mr. Wade can be trusted to spring a surprise on anyone who dares to expect the obvious from him. Nobody must be put off by the misleading naiveté of the opening chapters in *Heir Presumptive*, wherein the villain Eustace Hendel decides to kill off all the Hendels who stand between him and a title *plus* a fortune. The neatness of the finish is delightful ; and half-way through the book there comes a passage of such grisly virtuosity in a Highland deer-forest that when I reached it I had to put the book down and look away from the pages as I actually felt rather faint.

Mr. Valentine Williams writes a perfectly adequate "straight" detective story whenever he chooses ; and *The Clue of the Rising Moon* is far more genuine that its absurd name suggests. The plot is a house-party murder on the shores of a lake in New England, but the style is mercifully Old English and the solution in the classical tradition. Very different is the other New England plot, Miss Taylor's *The Tinkling Symbol*, where the crude outlines of a Cape Cod crime are so blurred by a deluge of Cape Cod lingo that Asey Mayo tries to pull an extremely fast one on us with his solution—and I am not sorry his detection proves shoddy as I dislike his personality so intensely.

The Shadow on the Downs is in the nature of a sequel to *Death in a Little Town*, and provides a further instalment of the detective

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capacities of the formidable Miss Perks. Mr. Woodthorpe has the professional novelist's *penchant* for developing character at the expense of his design, with the result that action has in the end to be arbitrarily imposed on his *dramatis personae* in order to keep the plot in motion at all. It would really be best if Miss Perks just went round Sussex putting people to rights without Mr. Woodthorpe feeling obliged to try and mystify us.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

THE COMPLETE MARXIST

A Handbook of Marxism. Edited by EMILE BURNS *Gollancz.* 5*s.*

Abyssinia and Italy. By EMILE BURNS. *Gollancz.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

The *Handbook* volume, of nearly eleven hundred pages, well printed and well bound in cloth, and published at 5*s.*, is one of the greatest of all Mr. Gollancz's miracles. For the reader who wants what it contains, it is dirt-cheap; and what it contains will probably be wanted by enough readers to justify Mr. Gollancz's enterprise. It is important to be clear about what it does contain. Of the text, a little more than half is devoted to extracts from the writings of Marx and Engels, and a little less than half to extracts from the writings of Lenin and Stalin. These four men are taken as standing for Marxism; and of the four naturally Marx gets most and Engels least, while Lenin and Stalin are treated roughly on an equality in allotting space. No other writer is admitted at all. Not only are the Marxian "revisionists" wholly excluded: there is nothing from Rosa Luxemburg, and nothing from Trotsky or any other Russian writer.

In fact, the selection is made, and the accompanying annotation written, throughout from a strictly Communist point of view. Marxism, for Mr. Burns, is Communism—that and nothing else; and it is strictly as an exposition of Marxian Communism that this handbook is to be regarded. This is not to suggest that Mr. Burns in any way falsifies Marx's text: he does not. But he selects those passages which are most important from the standpoint of an orthodox Communist valuation.

On this basis, the work of selection has been, on the whole, remarkably well done. Given Mr. Burns's assumptions, the selections from Marx himself, and from Engels, could have been improved in very few respects—by giving the whole of the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, by including at least the salient passages from *Wage-Labour and Capital*, and by citing at least a few outstanding passages from the Marx-Engels correspondence, at the cost of suppressing some of the passages from Marx's and Engels's more occasional writings on Ireland, the housing question, and similar matters.

Mr. Burns's preoccupation with Communist politics does, however, prevent him from giving an adequate presentation of Marx's specifically economic doctrines. The great difficulty of satisfactory selection from the three volumes of *Das Kapital* is easy to appreciate; but if his object had been to present a thorough summary of Marx's own views he would have been compelled to give more space to this, and to include something from the key chapters in Volume I dealing with "manufacture" and the Industrial Revolution, and also a good deal more from the remarkable and little-read Volume III, dealing with the actual processes of capitalist production, business crises and cycles, and the distribution of surplus value between the various capitalist claimants. As the selections stand, Mr. Burns has given only enough to enable his readers to learn the bare letter of Marxian economics, and not nearly enough to enable them to understand its relation to the actual phenomena of developing Capitalism. More Marx, of this sort, and less Stalin, would have fulfilled much better the function of giving the reader a clear grasp of the essential principles of Marxism. More might also have been given with advantage from Engels's *Feuerbach*; for the dialectical philosophy is somewhat skimpily treated, except in the later elaboration in Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*.

The extracts from Lenin's writings are, on the whole, well selected. Those from Stalin are far less satisfying to those who do not accept Mr. Burns's strict "orthodoxy" as a devout follower of the Stalinite interpretation. The reader will miss at least something from Trotsky's *Russian Revolution*, or from his earlier controversial writings; and the absence of extracts from Rosa Luxemburg's *Accumulation of Capital* and from Hilferding's *Finance-Capital* leaves a gap which no attempt is made to fill. Instead, we have a great deal of Stalin and a full reprint of the 1928 Programme of the Communist International, which ends the book, and is apparently meant as the *finis* that *coronat opus*. At least, it ends the extracts. Thereafter come brief biographical notes on the persons mentioned—of a singularly unenlightening kind, as they consist mainly of sticking *cliché* labels on to everybody, and a not very helpful bibliography which reads too like an advertisement of another publisher—Messrs. Martin Lawrence—whose Marxian reprints, important as they are, are too exclusively stressed and recommended.

In short, for the orthodox Communist Party member, Mr. Burns has provided the perfect Marxian handbook. For the rest of us, this is not so; but he has provided a guide to Marx which is adequate, except on the economic side, and a guide to the Communist interpretation of Marxism which is revealing in its shortcomings and omissions as well as in what it includes.

Application follows theory. In *Abyssinia and Italy* Mr. Burns applies Lenin's analysis of modern imperialism to the case of Abyssinia. His account is careful, clear and concise. The common reader will perhaps be most interested in the concluding chapters, in which Mr. Burns explains why Communists now urge sanctions—even military sanctions—against Italy and advocate (on lines similar to the more detailed proposals of "Vigilante's" in *Abyssinia*), the formation of a democratic and Socialist bloc within that sinister centre of capitalist plotting and duped bourgeois idealism—the League of Nations. Those who have for years been cursed in seven languages by Communists because they have urged that it was wise to give a conditional support to the League in spite of the fact that it is an association of Imperialist Powers to maintain their ill-gotten gains, will smile as they read the story of Mr. Burns's conversion. They will smile still more broadly when they read that it is the duty of all those who oppose Fascism and War to help to "secure progressive governments, which in the present state of things means a Labour Government in Britain . . ." But the smile need not be bitter. The correct application of Marxism is not easy, and we have all made mistakes.

UNEMPLOYMENT TO BLAME?

No Mean City—A Story of the Glasgow Slums. By ALEXANDER MCARTHUR and H. KINGSLEY LONG. *Longmans.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

A generation ago the saying that "One half of the world little knows how the other half lives" probably had more force than it has to-day. In the past few years, reports, newspaper articles, broadcasts, and sometimes drama films and novels, have combined to bring home to the general public the meaning of unemployment and overcrowding. And yet here is a story of gangsters in the slums of Glasgow—dealing with the post-war period and carrying us almost to the present year—at once authenticated and convincing and so fantastically horrible that it defies belief.

As some War books claimed attention by giving a straightforward account of the physical facts of life in the trenches, so this chronicle relies for its effect on lurid and detailed descriptions of scenes of brutality and squalor. The authors—one of whom was himself a Glasgow slum boy—are constantly aware that they will be met by charges of distortion and exaggeration, and break into their narrative with the cry: "This *is* so! In Gorbals it happens."

They describe the dreary verminous tenements, the orgies of drinking whisky and cheap red wine, the degraded lovemaking, the dance hall fights, the horrible street battles with razors and bottles, and the mutilated and trampled bodies of the victims. The chief characters depicted against this background are three types: Johnnie, the Razor King; Peter, the intelligent steady young man: and Bobbie and Lily, the star dancers. Each is ambitious, and for a few years, successful. The Razor King gains a fearful notoriety by brute force; Peter, by hard work and singleness of vision, approaches the ranks of black-coated workers and achieves respectability: the dancers have a little fame and something like prosperity. But the Razor King goes downhill by way of drink and crime to his defeat and death: Peter is involved in a strike and drifts finally into chronic unemployment, and the dancers quarrel, break their partnership, and are soon unwanted. For the most part the lives of these individuals are recorded with little sympathy or subtlety. Only Lizzie, the Razor King's wife, and for a moment Mrs. Stark his mother and one or two of the minor characters, are living beings with conflicting emotions, capable of making us want to know them.

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and written in undistinguished English—*No Mean City* is, notwithstanding, a significant and devastating book. You cannot put it down as a rather poor novel which has no interest for you. You have to read it, and to say "If this is at least part of life in Gorbals—and it is—what can be done about it?" The authors consider unemployment and overcrowding mainly responsible for the conditions they describe. They acknowledge that "No other city is making a more determined effort to rehouse and to help its poorer citizens." But unemployment remains, and as time goes on there must inevitably be less work to do. Are we to have unemployment as it is now—i.e., idleness? Will more people find relief from intolerable boredom by slicing open each other's faces, and soaking quarts of spirit? If not, how are we to prepare for the Age of Leisure? These are the questions to which *No Mean City* demands an answer. IRENE T. BARCLAY

"I OWE THE PUBLIC NOTHING"

The Lords of Creation. By F. L. ALLEN. *Hamish Hamilton.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

This account of Big Business in the United States during this century makes very lively reading. The author is most moderate in his comments, but the facts he produces form a fearful indictment of American capitalism. The laxity of the laws (consequent largely upon the rights possessed by States as against the Federal Government) gave to financiers a freedom from control existing in no other civilised country. The prodigious profits which they consequently took for themselves were a continually increasing tax upon production, until at last Wall Street killed the goose which laid the golden eggs. Mr. Allen gives an excellent description of the "pyramiding" by which men like Insull, Giannini and the Van Sweringen Brothers came to dominate enormous interests, over which the investing public held no control. The officials of the companies not only voted themselves vast salaries, bonuses and shares, but skilfully played the market against the investors whose interests they were supposed to serve. During the boom banks sold bonds and even common stock, like vacuum cleaners, from door to door, and as the fever for speculation spread and the price of shares rocketed to ever more unreasonable heights, Mr. Coolidge and his Financial Secretary, Mr. Mellon, so far from trying to calm the delirium, spoke only to encourage it.

Meanwhile, it must not be supposed that the artisans chiefly responsible for producing whatever was real in this wealth received an important share of it. At the beginning of the century, when the United States Steel Corporation was formed, Morgans received twelve and a half million dollars for their help in creating this monopoly. But one of the first resolutions of the new Board affirmed that they were "unalterably opposed to any extension of union labour." Capital might combine; Labour might not. When Mr. Morgan during the Northern Pacific Panic was asked if he did not owe the public an explanation, he characteristically answered "I owe the public nothing." (He was, of course, celebrated not only for the magnificence of his art collection but for his devotion to the Episcopal Church.) During the boom the profits made by such "Lords of Creation" were beyond computation—even the income tax returns of the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Mellon, were inaccurate. It is estimated that during the 1922–27 period the profits of industrial corporations increased by as much as 9 per cent. a year; meanwhile, the output of each factory worker was increasing by 3.5 per cent. a year, and his earnings by 2.4 per cent.

Mr. Allen ends his book with a series of question-marks. Mr. Roosevelt's government has tried to stop some of the more glaring abuses. Company officials now have to report changes in their share-holdings, salaries and bonuses received, and contracts made with their companies. Bankers have had to choose between deposit banking and investment banking. The House of Morgan, for instance, is no longer permitted to issue securities, but the possibility of effective working alliances between it and the houses of issue is obvious. Moreover, "the power of governmental regulation depends upon the vigilance, imagination and honesty of officials—very variable qualities." The gravest need of the United States is a Civil Service which is outside politics, and commands and deserves general respect.

Finally, here are some figures which are of topical interest since we are threatened here with a large programme of rearmament. The House of Morgan, whose services to the Allies can hardly be exaggerated, both borrowed American money for the Allies, and apportioned the British and French orders among munition makers. The president of the company so charmingly named Bethlehem Steel received bonuses of over a million and a half dollars for 1917 and over a million and a third for 1918. The E.I. du Pont de Nemours Powder Company paid on the par value of the original stock dividends totalling in 1915–1918 458½ per cent. The Calumet and Hecla Mining Company made in 1917 800 per cent. Mr. Allen remarks: "The House of Morgan believed in profits"—a comment which has the ring of an epitaph.

ROGER MARVELL

NEW NOVELS

Cut and Come Again. By H. E. BATES. *Cape.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
Fierce and Gentle. By H. A. MANHOOD. *Cape.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
The Basement Room. By GRAHAM GREENE. *Cresset Press.* 3*s.* 6*d.*
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Tarabas, A Guest on Earth. By JOSEPH ROTH. *Heinemann.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
Woman Alive. By SUSAN ERTZ. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 5*s.*

From the romantic charm of the English landscape during the autumn and winter months, we cannot separate a certain touch of melancholy. In an attitude that suggests infinite resignation, an abandoned cart thrusts up its shafts against a pallid rainy sunset; pools of water shine, cold and metallic, among the furrows of a sodden ploughed field; yellow leaves lie flattened on the crown of the road. . . . It is a melancholy that we find—somewhat idealised—in the poems of Wordsworth and—more definitely expressed—in the verses of Crabbe. To-day, it supplies the background of many of Mr. H. E. Bates' finest short tales. Not that the element of gloom is melodramatised. For Mr. Bates is, above all things, a self-conscious artist. His scope is limited; but there are very few modern English writers who understand their own limitations so well or observe them so wisely. Every sentence—and this is surely one of the chief criteria of good writing—seems to perform a very definite function, quickly, vividly, without undue expenditure of words. *Cut and Come Again* maintains the high level set by Mr. Bates' previous volumes. It includes fourteen stories; and each of them forms a complete composition—produces a separate and, often, an extremely poignant effect. Take, for instance, one of his best and, incidentally, his longest short stories, *The Mill*—the account of how a young and very stupid country girl, farmed out to service by her miserly parents, is seduced by her employer, a middle-aged dealer in scrap-iron, and returns home pregnant. Between Mr. Bates' story and the story that Maupassant might have written on the same theme, there is as great a difference as exists between the English and the French countryside, or the characters of the English and French peasant. The personages of Mr. Bates' tale are dumb, patient, stolid. Their passions lack emphasis; while the country in which they live—across which Alice's father bumps early and late in his decrepit Ford van, selling rabbits, vegetables and flowers—has the flat, sad, monotonous colouring of a Fenland landscape.

Except by quotation, it is difficult to illustrate the qualities of Mr. Bates' prose style:

> . . . Hearing nothing she walked across the yard. Beyond the piles of rusted iron a sluice tore down past the mill-wall on a glacier of green slime. She stopped and peered down over the stone parapet at the water. Beyond the sluice a line of willows were shedding their last leaves, and the leaves came floating down the current like little yellow fish. She watched them come and surge through the grating, and then vanish under the water-arch. Then, watching the fish-like leaves, she saw a real fish, dead, caught in the rusted grating, thrown here by the force of descending water. Then she saw another, and another. Her eyes registered no surprise. She walked round the parapet, and then, leaning over and stretching, she picked up one of the fish. It was cold, and very stiff, like a fish of celluloid, and its eyes were like her own, round and glassy. Then she walked along the path, still holding the fish and occasionally looking at it. The path circled the mill-pond and vanished, farther on, into a bed of osiers. The mill-pond was covered in duck-weed,

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> the green crust split into blackness here and there by chance currents of wind or water. The osiers were leafless, but quite still in the windless air. And standing still, she looked at the tall osiers for a moment, her eyes reflecting their stillness and the strange persistent absence of all sound.

I have transcribed the above extract, not because it strikes me as sensationally fine, but because it is entirely adequate to the scene and the mood represented. The author's style is neither slipshod nor over-written. It is precise, simple, straightforward, never descending to colloquialism or offending by the traces of archaism that are sometimes the result of undue attention to the niceties of prose. Mr. Manhood, on the other hand, seldom allows us to forget that he is an accomplished writer, versed in all the tricks, and saturated in the jargon of his trade. His stories are neat but rather unsatisfying. In the effort to write vividly, he is apt to write clumsily; and we read of an airman, walking towards his machine, who "wooden-skittled across the sun-scorched grass . . . smoke tufting from his cigarette like a thin substitute for the stuff of clouds." Now and then, he misuses an image so that it becomes completely meaningless—"dusk was settling like grape-bloom on a ripened earth"—or overworks his sense of the picturesque, as when he remarks that a fighting-cock's spurs in their case "looked oddly like the talons torn from an eagle with rags of flesh still hanging, looked like the soul of a murderer . . ."; while I find it hard to forgive the innkeeper's wife, whose "lip was bleeding where she had bitten it over-hard . . ."

Whereas Mr. Bates has made the short story his vocation—*Cut and Come Again* is far better value than the novel which preceded it—the authors represented in the admirable Cresset Library have all reached short-story writing from other fields of literary endeavour, in which they have achieved, most of them, a considerable degree of popular success. Here is Mr. Graham Greene—always competent and entertaining; Mr. James Laver—extremely adroit when he manages to give whimsicality a wide berth; Miss Sylvia Townsend Warner and Mrs. Valentine Dobrée. Mrs. Dobrée, one of the least known, shows up, as it happens, to the greatest advantage. Her first story—inspired, no doubt, by reminiscences of Flaubert's *Un Coeur Simple*—depicts an old-fashioned servant, a devoted caretaker, whose existence is dominated by the prestige of the empty house to which she attends and her memories of the family by which it was once inhabited.

Every reader who considers that the average modern novel is much too expensive and that the contents of an ordinary novel might often be expressed within the limits of a long short story, will welcome these neat, silver-jacketed Cresset books, each of which includes three or four short stories, yet costs only three-and-sixpence. . . . *Modern Short Stories* is more indigestible. It includes stories by such distinguished practitioners as Martin Armstrong, L. A. G. Strong, André Maurois and A. Calder Marshall, accompanied by others of less note. The selection is catholic; but I cannot help feeling that short stories should be written for individual enjoyment, and that, among a score of companions, good and bad, even the best short story is inclined to lose a great deal of its lustre.

Novels, this week, are somewhat heterogeneous. *The Longest Years* is all that Sigrid Undset's numerous admirers have learned to expect—the narrative of an eventful but not unduly dramatic childhood, measured, well written, richly detailed, yet haunted by that slight stodginess which, at any rate in translation, is one of the characteristics of Scandinavian prose. *Tarabas, A Guest on Earth*, the work of an exiled German-Jewish novelist, Joseph Roth, is half-realistic novel, half-legend or fable. Tarabas has committed a murder during his youth. He returns to Russia from America, is caught up in the revolution, establishes himself as petty dictator during the civil war and dies in a monastic cell, having expiated his crimes.

In *Woman Alive*, Miss Susan Ertz, whose talents up till now have been confined to the sphere of the modern domestic novel, has launched out on to the stormy seas of prophecy and pacifist propaganda. During a short but exceptionally savage European War, a disease is disseminated that carries off the entire feminine population. The only survivor is a hearty, healthy, hitherto not particularly attractive, virgin who has earned a meagre living as games' mistress at a conventional English school. Naturally, this sole surviving female becomes the object of a quasi-religious cult. Naturally, she exploits the advantages of her position. Rather unwillingly, she allows herself to be installed, a semi-divine Queen Bee, at Buckingham Palace, and, as a condition of agreeing to carry on the race, makes her own terms, lectures the government, delivers broadcast talks, and generally does her best to bring quarrelsome and unreasonable masculinity to its senses. . . . Impossible not to admire the enlightened intentions with which Miss Ertz would appear to have set forth; impossible to repress an occasional shudder at the realisation of her plan. Stella is so very much the games' mistress—her harangues so entirely devoid of humour—that by comparison the actual world seems an earthly paradise. As Henry James is said to have observed at a vulgar luncheon party: "*Murder and rapine* would be preferable to *this!*"

PETER QUENNELL

POWYS, POWYS AND POWYS

The Powys Brothers. By RICHARD HERON WARD. *Lane.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Dorset Essays. By LLEWELYN POWYS. *Lane.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Of course, Mr. Ward means the three writing brothers, and *his* Powys, *par excellence*, is John Cowper. He is on his face before this mahatma, this "elemental-eternal figure," and aggressively contemptuous of all who have presumed to retain an erect position. Mr. John Cowper Powys is a seer, a "logos-utterer": his experience is four-dimensional: to him the real is unreal and the unreal real, and the unreal is, of course, "the real reality." His latest novel is "timeless, immortal . . . moving, thrilling, mystical, tragical, maniacal, magical . . ." And damn'd be he who first cries: Hold, Enough!

Mr. Llewelyn Powys can be praised more moderately—his prose is "superb," "miraculous," and he himself "a great liver," but not *quite* a great writer; while Mr. Theodore Powys—poor Theodore, the lowest and last!—is "a great artist." This Mr. Ward has learnt to consider a blighting judgment; however, even the novel most severely chidden for its art (*Unclay*) gives us "a sense of unique and tremendous beauty when the book is done." Mr. Powys might well reply, with Elinor Dashwood: "I do not perceive how you could express yourself more warmly"—that is, of course, provided that he had not read the same critic on *A Glastonbury Romance*.

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BARCHESTER PILGRIMAGE (7/6 net) by Ronald Knox has been enthusiastically greeted on all sides. The Trollope party, represented by the *Times Literary Supplement*, says of the two girl hikers powdering their noses in Barchester Cathedral that "Trollope would have admired . . . and shuddered at the callousness of it." *Punch* assures us that we need not be Trollope addicts to enjoy the book, which "has a larger ambit than Trollope." Adding that it is "wholly delightful," *Punch* is one with the *Church Times*, which calls it "a delight." But we sadly realise that there are those who sneer at the world of Barchester as elegant and trifling—because they cannot spare time for reading CATHOLICISM, PROTESTANTISM AND CAPITALISM by Professor Fanfani (6/- net). We will not argue with them, except by asking that, if they insist on solid work, why do they not read SAINT PETER CANISIUS by James Brodrick, S.J. (25/- net)? It is indispensable to the serious student of the 16th century—that very serious century, which some of us only care to tackle when it is brightened by "Father Brodrick's lively style and frequent topical allusions" (*Month*). But we can all, at any time (even those of us who regard BARCHESTER PILGRIMAGE as the ideal form of writing), face modern problems: we even discuss them at lunch, with some show of intelligence—and who will blame us for borrowing from Maritain's FREEDOM IN THE MODERN WORLD (6/- net)? Masters like Maritain are meant to be followed.

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It is a commonplace that the strongest influence on the Powyses has been their father the clergyman; but priestly as they all are, they are not priestly enough, not moral and aspiring enough, for Mr. Ward. Even John Cowper comes in for a gentle reproof here: it will be remembered that he looks upon happiness as man's chief end, and upon the ideal of "striving" as opposed to it, "leaving aside," hints Mr. Ward, "the possibility of higher desires being paramount, desires such as a change and a striving upward out of evil into good." Mr. Llewelyn Powys's attitude is commended for its insistence on "life," but at the same time deplored as insufficiently four-dimensional, as too exclusively sensual and earthy. (Some of us will be inclined to consider this a shallow view.) But again, it is Mr. Theodore Powys who gets into the real trouble; his unique blend of Buddhism and devil-worship, fear and passivity will not do at all. It is just laziness, says Mr. Ward severely: Mr. Powys simply wanted an excuse to turn his back on life, to shirk his duties and avoid setting about the improvement of his character—which, and not God as he chooses to imagine, is the really horrible thing about the universe. (I have attempted to make out in what, speaking practically, Mr. Powys's rejection of life and its duties is supposed to consist, and can think of nothing except that he lives in a village. But then, Mr. Llewelyn Powys does not even live in a village—and yet his is "a great life!"). However, Mr. Theodore Powys need not despair; Mr. Ward thought him, after all, a kind man, though "with a kindness so shy, so doubtful of its reception, that it all but remained permanently in hiding." The image of Theodore timidly standing up to Mr. Ward's reproofs and encouragement is highly comic. For though he has all the priestly innocence of his brothers, yet in *his* innocence (and his alone) there is something doubtful, a hint of slyness, of amiable treachery; and while his picture of life is serious enough—at least as serious as theirs, for it has more depth, more emotional substance—yet somehow it has not *quite* "that severe, that earnest air." Mr. Ward was advised by Mr. John Cowper Powys to treat his three subjects as though they were characters in a novel; luckily, apart from an abortive attempt or two he has not done so. Luckily because, though a novelist, he does not appear to have any keen sense of personality.

However, he has done his best to give satisfaction by catching the tone of his two favourites. The following, for instance, I take to be delicate homage to Llewelyn:

> This country has a dangerous beauty, the dangerous beauty of a man whose body is burnt with the sun, in whose veins runs the sun-heated volcanic fire of lusty blood, the beauty, divine, yet still dangerous to all but those whose pagan consciousness is still awake in an age of over-sophistication, of shameless and exultant nakedness, nakedness shameless and defiant . . .

It will be concluded that Mr. Ward is somewhat shrill and repetitive. He is.

What a relief to turn to *Dorset Essays*, where Mr. Llewelyn Powys is at his best. He is fond of calling himself disobedient and stiff-necked, but nevertheless the essential characteristic of his mind is piety, and this last book (dedicated to his father's memory) is devout without disguise. It is a service of remembrance for the beloved past with its "images of joy"—the wild valleys and cliff-tops of Dorset, the streets of Weymouth and of Dorchester, ("Oh! how happy I have been shopping in this town on the Saturday before Christmas"), the sea, the wild creatures loved as one with the countryside, the old faces loved as one with the shops and street-corners. He tells them over quietly, without self-consciousness, with no tendency to declamation. He makes no to-do about the transience of what we love, the short time we have to remember and cherish it; nevertheless, the simple, fond enumeration is extremely touching. The *Essays* are illustrated by many photographs, some of them beautiful, and form a book which everyone, surely, must think charming, but for which those who have themselves Dorset memories will feel something more.

K. JOHN

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GRAMOPHONE NOTES

THERE is one definite virtue in academic music: it is eminently *social*. In this sense it is the counterpart of the "nice book" for which the young lady asks at Boots. Thus, when some people whom you do not know very well are dining with you and demand "a nice tune on the gramophone," it is perfectly safe to play them Saint-Saëns' *Introduction and Rondo*, played by Heifetz and the London Philharmonic Orchestra, under John Barbirolli (H.M.V. DB2580), or Respighi's *Suite, The Birds*, played by the Brussels Conservatoire Orchestra, under Désiré Defauw (Col. LX411–2). Both these works are pretty, well made, melodious and harmonically innocuous. And they are excellently played and recorded. The Respighi consists of amusing, clever, but always musical paraphrases of a set of impressionistic eighteenth (seventeenth?) century pieces. The Saint-Saëns requires no description. For myself I have no hesitation in placing Beethoven's *Second Piano Concerto in B flat*, played by Artur Schnabel and the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Malcolm Sargent (H.M.V. DB2573–6), in the same category. It was no doubt necessary that this work should be recorded, to complete the set; but not the most determined Beethovenian could put up much defence for it, except on academic grounds. The performance is up to the standard to which we are accustomed from that ensemble; but the work itself is extremely dull, except perhaps for the slow movement, which has a certain distinguishing lyricism. On the whole, however, the work might be quite good Czerny, but very poor Haydn. So that it is with relief that one turns to the real thing, represented by a new recording of the *Egmont Overture*, by the Dresden State Orchestra, under Karl Böhm (H.M.V. C2780). This is quite an adequate performance, though somewhat nerveless. Any of our own municipal orchestras could do as well, if not better, which is more than could have been said in the days when Fritz Busch ruled over the Dresden orchestra. Mozart is delightfully represented this month by three works: *Divertimenti in D* (K136) *and F* (K138), played by the Boyd Neel String Orchestra (Decca K787–9), and the *Piano Concerto in E flat* (K449), played by Kathleen Long and the same orchestra, plus wind instruments, etc. (Decca K784–6). The first works show the composer at his most unpretentious; this is gay, light stuff—what Satie called "musique d'ameublement." The concerto is a more interesting one than that recorded by the same artists last month; the final movement is especially charming. Wagnerians should certainly acquire *Excerpts from Die Walküre*, played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowski, with the part of Wotan sung by Lawrence Tibbett. The performance is excellent and Tibbett sings superbly in Wotan's Farewell; it is a voice that reminds one of Schorr's. I did not care for the way an interlude from Act 2 was hitched on to the Ride, as if they were continuous; but the whole of the final section is given. I should

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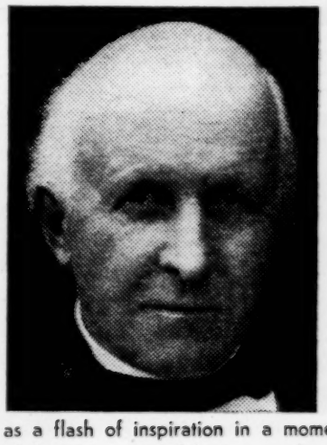

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like to call special attention to a record of Berlioz's *Funeral March for the Last Scene of Hamlet*, played by Sir Hamilton Harty and the London Philharmonic Orchestra (Col. LX421). This is a very eerie, oddly original work, recalling a picture by Delacroix. The performance is perfect. The latest recording of Bach's popular *Violin Concerto in E*, by Hubermann and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under Issay Dobrowen (Col. LX408–10) seems to me superior to Menuhin's rendering. Hubermann, who has a very massive and definite style of playing, combines the classical method of Adolf Busch with a warmer, more expressive tone. The dynamic gradations—the test of a soloist—are very fine. Unfortunately the recording goes slightly out of tune in the adagio; otherwise it is very good. My list of orchestral records closes with a charming, unpretentious work by Liadov, *Eight Russian Folk Dances*, played by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra (H.M.V. DB2443 and DA1415), in which some pretty, sadish tunes are treated with the orchestral skill of the Rimsky-Korsakoff school.

Topping the list of chamber music comes a masterpiece, Schubert's *String Quintet in C*, played by the Pro Arte quartet and Anthony Pini (2nd cello) (H.M.V. DB2561–5). These now famous players give a performance that is impeccable for balance and artistry, though perhaps a trifle too subdued and intimate in the first movement. But the lovely embroideries of the slow movement suit them to perfection, and I have rarely heard the solemn trio of the Scherzo played with such depth. I also thoroughly enjoyed Arthur Bliss' *Clarinet Quintet*, played by the Griller Quartet and Frederick Thurston (Decca K780–3). This extremely beautiful work is idyllic in the first movement, romantic and passionate in the second and fourth, elegiac in the third. It is English music, and needs very little hearing to convince one of its beauty, being thoroughly consistent in its harmony, in spite of the relative complexity of its texture. It deserves to become popular, and the present performance should succeed in making it so. I cannot say as much for Schumann's *Piano Quartet in E flat*, played by the Elly Ney Trio (Decca CA8313–16). This is a stodgy, Mendelssohnian work, leavened by a few lovely, spontaneous phrases. The performance does not flatter the music.

The Italian ballad style seems preferable to the English, for the sentiment is more genuine; therefore Dino Borgioli's rendering of "O del mio amato ben" (Donaudy) and "Piscatore 'e pusillego" (Tagliaferro), with Ivor Newton at the piano (Col. LX422) may appeal to many. It well displays his beautiful, plum-like voice. Then, Elisabeth Schumann gives a lovely performance of the *Evening Prayer* and *Lied des Sandmännchens* from Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* (H.M.V. DA1439). Christmas in Germany: fir-trees weighed down with sparkling snow, gingerbread, steeply sloping roofs, frosty moonlight, light from a church window, voices singing. . . All this seems very far from Alexander Kipnis singing, with the assistance of the Berlin State Orchestra, "No! she never loved me!" from Verdi's *Don Carlos* (H.M.V. E610)—a rather dull aria, finely sung; less far from Brahms' *Feldeinsamkeit* and Wolf's *Gesang Weylas*, sung by Heinrich Schlusnus (Decca DE7041)—a disappointing record, considering the usual excellence of this singer, for his rendering of both songs is painfully square and unyielding in rhythm.

Dance Records. *Top Hat* will be most people's preoccupation this month, and I expect they will prefer to have Fred Astaire's own rendering, given with Leo Reisman's band, of *No Strings*, *Cheek to Cheek* (Brunswick, RL296), *Top Hat* and *Isn't this a lovely Day* (Br. RL297). These records include the sound of Astaire's tap-dancing. *No Strings* and *Top Hat* are played with rather more weight, and an admirable trombonist, by the Dorsey Brothers (Br. RL307); but the pleasantest version of *Cheek to Cheek*, which is incidentally the best of these tunes, is that of Guy Lombardo and his band (Br. RL281). *Cotton* and *Truckin'* are "different," as the phrase goes, and owe this quality to Duke Ellington (Br. 02080). *Londonola*, if you can face the name, should be good for dancing (Roy Fox and his band, Decca F5679); and *Dinner for One*, by Ambrose and his band (Decca F5742), is an amusing vocal number in the "Miss Otis" style. Of *Song of the Cello*, which misappropriates the andante from Beethoven's Pathetic Sonata, the less said the better, though Jack Hylton and his band give it the benefit of the doubt (H.M.V. BD235); but the *Please Teacher Selections*, from which the last number is taken, should be bought by all who enjoyed the show, for it is recorded by the original artists (Col. DX709–10).

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1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, November 22nd.

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and female highbrow during the *première* of a Mickey Mouse film, the dialogue to be strictly relevant to what is being shown on the screen. Extra marks for film jargon of the more joyfully absurd kind. The whole, however, to have an air of deep solemnity.

Report by H. L. Morrow

No sooner was this competition in print than I realised (too late, alas !) that it was not really the sort of competition which bears chilly scrutiny. There was too much of the charade about it, and charades are notoriously occasions on which insignificant people achieve reputations for wit and the solid fellows (if their hostess allows them) stand dumb, like plumbers' mates, in the background, wishing to God it was all over and they were back at the bar in the other room.

This dialogue could have been quite amusing at a party. As a matter of cold typewritten talk it produced—and I thoroughly deserved it—the flavour of Benedictine at the breakfast table. Competitors must have felt this, too, for there weren't above 20 entries, and none of them bright at that. I began to, and still do, feel rather like a butter-and-egg man who has staked (and lost) his money in putting on an Arts Club play at Drury Lane. It is all very sad, and I am much wiser.

As for the entries—well, there was Mr. Allan M. Laing, who, I suggest to the Editor in all unfairness, should have his Competition Licence endorsed here and now and be banned from entry for a period of not less than six months. After Mr. Laing's canter in proper Eclipse-like style, the rest were nowhere, except, perhaps, a gentleman (I fancy) who resorted to the sort of indecencies which can only be dug out of a medical dictionary. (It took me, by the way, quite a while to discover just how indecent they were, by which time the joke, if any, had worn off.) Probably had the entries been read aloud I might have smiled now and then, but I doubt very much whether I should have laughed.

The trouble, most likely, is that cinema jargon, like the jargon of some modern psychologists, is so close to burlesque that ordinary listeners like myself are apt to laugh in what we used to be told at school was the " wrong place," but which, where we were concerned, was most assuredly the right place. It is all rather like " Beachcomber " and the *Daily Express* : there are so few occasions on which one can be quite certain that Mr. Morton in his lustihood has not leaped over his own column, wrenched the pens from Lord Castlerosse and Mr. James Douglas and insisted on writing their stuff for them.

Mr. Laing made this point clear when he made his Female Highbrow remark : " Quite. And yet one has to admit the scene has a quaint—what is the word ? Oh, yes—humour, don't you think ? " That, I feel, would be funny if only it weren't so depressingly like the real thing. The same applies to the last words of his wretched Male Highbrow : " . . . . somehow popular appreciation always makes me uneasy." That sort of thing again might have convulsed the audience at a Wilde first-night in the late 'eighties. To-day it is the kind of remark that is both delivered and received in all solemnity.

It is true that there were odd flashes here and there, such as Alan R. Thomas's : " Mr. Shortt's signature has neither aesthetic charm nor cinematic movement " ; T. Naisby's : " She was so obviously going to fall into that tub that I see no point in allowing her to do it " ; and C. F. Carr's *cri de coeur* : " How I love the bourgeois cinematic ideology ! " There was also Guy Hadley's alarming theory which, though it is utterly irrelevant to the competition, is perhaps worth passing on to those whom it is meant to burlesque : " . . . . So amusing to see the bourgeoisie flocking to a film which spells death to the bourgeois cinema ! Disney's success means the elimination of the stars. No more sexual substitutes made out of celluloid. Even Garbo must go." I have a horrible feeling, however, that somewhere up among the frosty altitudes even that notion is already out of date.

In the circumstances, there will be no prize, for though Mr. Laing's mare passed the post in a cloud of dust, she was on examination, alas ! found to be riderless.

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CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 151.—LEGGE-PULLAR'S MAJORITY

" That dinner-party problem was a snorter," said young Legge-Pullar, the new member for Dopewell.

" Nonsense," I said. " Stacks of people solved it."

" Well, well," said Legge-Pullar, " perhaps my brain's been addled by politics. But what I was leading up to is a little problem of my own. I daresay your readers won't think much of it, though."

" Let's hear it."

" It concerns my majority," said Legge-Pullar.

" It occurred to me as I lay awake, after the declaration of the poll, that I could divide it into two numbers. And each of these has the same peculiar properties."

" Yes ? "

" Each is a four-figure number ; each has no two digits the same ; and each is equal to the square of the sum of two numbers—the number represented by its first two digits and the number represented by the last two. You follow me ? "

" Perfectly, Legge-Pullar, thank you."

What was Legge-Pullar's majority ?

PROBLEM 149.—THE REMARKABLE MARKS

(Mr. A. G. Stripp's solution).

From the remark made by Davies it can readily be deduced that the four combined totals were 60, 70, 80 and 90.

Next, examine Andrews' assertion that the sum of the squares of two of each boy's marks was equal to the sum of the squares of the other two. Since

$$(ac+bd)^2+(ad-bc)^2=(ad+bc)^2+(ac-bd)^2,$$

four different positive integers, such that the sum of the squares of two of them is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two, may be found by means of generators a, b, c and d.

If we put

$$S=(ac+bd)+(ad-bc)+(ad+bc)+(ac-bd)=90,$$

it follows that

$$a(c+d)=45 ;$$

and with the restriction that none of the integers must be greater than 30 only one solution is possible (for a = 9, b = 1, c = 3, d = 2, or for a = 5, b = 1, c = 5, d = 4). This, in descending order, is the set :

29 25 21 15.

S = 80 gives seven sets of integers satisfying the same condition, none with all prime numbers, but including the set

26 22 19 13 ;

S = 80 gives six sets, one of which is

23 19 17 11 ;

these are all prime numbers.

S = 60 gives eight sets, none with all prime numbers, but including the set

20 16 15 9.

The columns are all in Arithmetical Progression, and we now have the complete table :—

	Arithmetic.	Algebra.	Geometry.	Trigonometry.	Total.
1.	29	25	21	15	90
2.	26	22	19	13	80
3.	23	19	17	11	70
4.	20	16	15	9	60

From Bailey's remark the order of merit of the four boys is at once seen to be

1. Martin.
2. Keith.
3. Norman.
4. Leonard.

PROBLEM 148.—SOCCER

A set of Low's cartoons goes to : H. C. Hall, 5 Shafton Road, London, E.9.

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PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

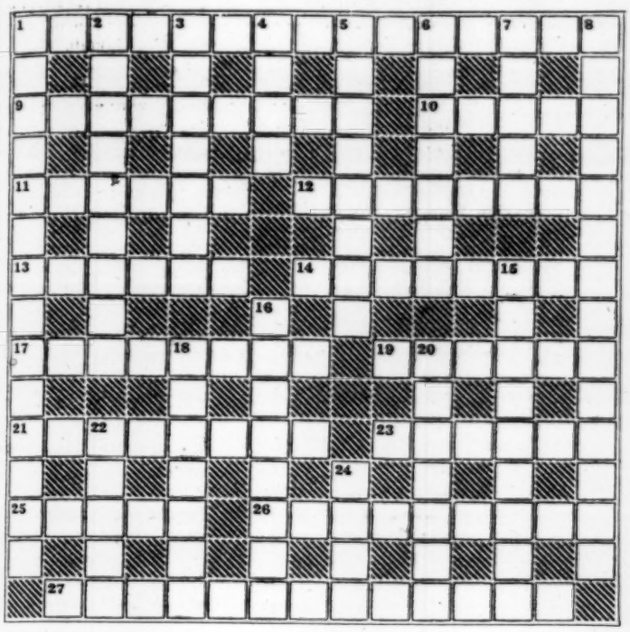
In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize, consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10s. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope ; but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 297

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday. Prize-winners should address their claims to the Editor.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
Mrs. Williamson, 25 Belgrave Road, Corstorphine, Edinburgh, 12

ACROSS

1. Light sheets for warm weather.
9. A sound theory with a likeness to a bogged animal.
10. One can no doubt get on in this business without wire pulling.
11. Starfish, of course.
12. Mob the bottom class.
13. I've been confused with Odo in Spain.
14. He sizes up things.
17. Presumably describes any part of the coast of the Leeward Islands.
19. This pattern is not restricted to military bodies.
21. Brainy, without being clever.
23. Takes the offensive nasally.
25. An alphabetical ending.
26. The purpose of being under canvas?
27. Races for salesmen in China?

DOWN

1. He sticks in his hobby.
2. The light of unreality.
3. Send tea to a poor district.
4. Knight of the table.
5. Are these smoked by gasbags?
6. Customary duties.
7. An Empire rubber.
8. If one's virtue has not cost something it is apparently worthless.
15. Not forgetting 22 with a tint.
16. The dressmaker's world.
18. Not what the pot is hung on to keep it hot.
20. Anna is about 10.
22. An old magistrate about the day before.
24. Cooks vessels capsized.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

L	E	T	U	P	■	F	I	R	E	B	R	A	N	D
A	■	O	■	R	■	E	■	E	■	F	■	I	■	■
M	I	N	C	E	P	I	E	S	■	T	I	T	A	N
B	■	I	■	C	■	N	■	T	■	R	■	E	■	E
S	A	C	K	I	N	G	■	C	H	A	R	R	E	D
W	■	■	■	S	■	E	■	U	■	Y	■	N	■	■
O	U	T	L	E	T	■	C	R	O	S	S	O	U	T
O	■	O	■	■	■	C	■	E	■	■	■	O	■	E
L	A	W	C	O	U	R	T	■	T	W	I	N	E	D
■	■	N	■	V	■	O	■	B	■	R	■	■	■	D
C	A	M	P	E	R	S	■	O	V	E	R	P	A	Y
H	■	O	■	R	■	S	■	L	■	C	■	L	■	B
A	Z	U	R	E	■	C	H	E	C	K	M	A	T	E
R	■	S	■	A	■	U	■	R	■	E	■	I	■	A
T	W	E	N	T	Y	T	W	O	■	R	I	D	E	R

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

CEMENT SHARES—PUBLIC UTILITY ACT—AMERICAN SHARES TO SELL

THE cement trade is in the news again with an announcement of minor financial importance, but one which may be regarded as a further indication of the changed conditions in the industry. A new company called "The Cement and Concrete Association" has been formed as a co-operative research and propaganda concern. Whatever Mr. Neville Chamberlain may mean by his £100,000,000 road scheme, the outlook for cement companies is extraordinarily good, and even when the results for the current year are known, there is still better to come. Since many old contracts for the supply of cement were entered into during the price war of 1933–34, the results of 1935 will not fully reflect the higher prices now in force. A current memorandum prepared by a well-known firm of jobbers estimates the results of the "Blue Circle" combine. The following table shows last year's dividends, estimated earnings and dividends, and yields on four cement companies.

	Present Price.	Divs. % Est. 1934.	Divs. % Est. 1935.	Est. 1935 Earnings.	Yield % on 1934 divs. £ s. d.	Yield % on Est. divs. £ s. d.
Assoc. Portland Cement ..	65/-	10	15	16.8	3 1 6	4 12 3
British Portland Cement ..	4¼	17½	20	24	4 2 3	4 14 0
Alpha Cement, Ltd. ..	36/6	5	8	8	2 14 9	4 7 9
Tunnel Portland Cement, Ltd.	50/-	18	25	30	3 12 0	5 0 0

The Associated Company is more highly geared than the other companies in the industry, and a comparatively steeper increase in dividend may therefore be expected. If the current conditions continue, a dividend of 20 per cent. may be anticipated for 1936, which would return a yield of 6¼ per cent. at the current price. This may seem to be looking rather far ahead, but the estimates take no account of improving conditions due to Government road and rail schemes. An interim dividend of 5 per cent. has been paid, none having been paid in respect of previous years, and these shares certainly do not look dear. Estimates of current and future earnings are very largely conjectural in the case of Tunnel and Alpha Cement. Tunnel in 1934 raised nearly £750,000 of new capital, while a further amount over and above that required for the repayment of its debentures was raised in 1935. The interim dividend has been increased from 8¾ per cent. to 10 per cent. In 1936 a dividend of at least 30 per cent. should be forthcoming.

At one time there was talk of Tunnel having been taken over by Alpha, but the proposition, if it really existed at all, appears to have been dropped. In the case of Alpha the estimates are even more difficult, but in this case we have to assist us an official circular from the company. According to this circular it would appear that the profits for 1935 are likely to produce earnings on the ordinary shares of something over 8 per cent. and an interim dividend of 4 per cent. has been paid. Alpha is not a popular share, but little things often create great prejudices. The plants are believed to be the most modern in the country, the new management, untried in England, is believed to be good, but the company shows a certain impatience with the established order of doing things. For example, the company wished to issue a further £200,000 5½ per cent. preference shares, but was precluded from doing so because the profits for the preceding year were not sufficient to cover the dividend on the total issue twice over. The company got round this by giving an auditor's report for the first eight months of the current year, and obtained the shareholders' sanction. Incidentally, the shares were offered in the first place to preference shareholders on terms which were very attractive. Immediately after the result of the issue had been made known the company announced the formation of the Atlas Cement Company of South Africa, which would shortly be issuing 5 per cent. debentures in London, the interest on these debentures for a limited period to be guaranteed by Alpha. This guarantee would, of course, rank in front of the preference dividends of the Alpha Company, and it seems reasonable to complain that the company should have said something about the new venture before rather than after the preference issue. There seems little doubt that the company should prove successful in South Africa, as there must be an assured and increasing market for cement arising out of the requirements of deep level mining on the Rand. Of the three companies the Alpha is the most speculative, but on the other hand, the popular market leaders may have been run up too high in comparison with other companies. At present prices Tunnel appears to be the best to buy.

* * *

Section 32 of the Public Utility Act of 1935 occasioned many a smile. It reads as follows:

> If any provision of this title or the application of such provision to any person or circumstances shall be held invalid, the remainder of the title and the application of such provision to persons or circumstances other than those as to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

The Federal District Court of Baltimore has promptly accepted the invitation and declared the Act unconstitutional. This Court is not, of course, the supreme authority, but the verdict assisted by the upward swing in electric power sales has helped the utility market. Even if the Act is scrapped in its entirety, however, this is not the end of the war on the holding companies, who are still very vulnerable to enforced rate reductions by their subsidiaries.

In England, agitation against uninformative accounts takes the form of a plea for consolidated revenue accounts. In America, we require to deconsolidate. Electric Power and Light Corporation showed in 1934 consolidated net income of $1,747,000 available for bond interest requiring $1,589,000. Only two of its many subsidiaries, the Dallas and Louisiana Companies, paid common dividends aggregating $1,145,000, interest on bonds held producing $267,000 and preferred dividends $218,000. The net cash income after deducting expenses of $407,000 amounted to $1,229,000. The balance of $518,000 is the equity in undivided earnings after deducting current dividend requirements of subsidiary preferred stocks, whether paid or not, and irrespective of all unpaid arrears. The Utah subsidiary provided a negative of $1,187,000. This loss need not concern Electric Power and Light, since the parent takes only the profits, and bears none of the losses of the subsidiary. United Gas Corporation contributed a positive of $1,390,000, but as very much more than this sum is required for unpaid dividend arrears on United Gas First Preferred, the nominal surplus on the year's working is of small immediate value to the parent company. In fact, American stockholders may well sigh for the mediaeval methods of English accountants who "take the cash and let the credits (and the debits) go." Electric Power and Light 5 per cent. Bonds stand at 73 to yield 6.8 per cent.

Public Enemy No. 1 is Electric Bond and Share. Of the total income in 1934 of $14 millions it is estimated that nearly $5 millions came from fees, $6 millions from bond and note interest, and no more than $3 millions from dividends on common stocks held. Preferred dividends were earned with a margin and paid in full. Now the Act expressly forbids the entering into service contracts, and the company is thus threatened with the loss of its fee income of $5 millions a year. Still, the company does not get fees for nothing, and certainly would not provide free service for the benefit of minority stockholders in its subsidiaries. It is safe to say that if the fee income goes, a large part of the expenses of $4½ millions would go also. The $6 and $5 preferred stocks at 75 and 67 respectively are interesting holdings, especially as the cash and notes held more than cover the current market values. These stocks and Electric Power and Light Bonds are not for the widow and orphan, but for the investor who will take a chance.

As a change from stocks to buy, here is a list of American preferred stocks which might be sold at or about present levels.

Stock.	Call Price.	Present Bid Price.	Arrears of Dividend.
1. Allied Chemical and Dye $7 Pref.	120	127⅛	Nil
2. American Smelting and Refining $6 Pref.	105	104	6.00
3. Brooklyn Manhattan Transit $6 Pref.	100	98½	Nil
4. North American Edison $6 Pref.	105	98	Nil
5. Prudential Investors $6 Pref. ..	110	97	Nil
6. Safeway Stores $6 Pref. ..	110	108½	Nil
7. Solvay Amer. Investors $5½ Pref.	110	111	Nil
8. Wesson Oil and Snowdrift $4 Pref.	85	83⅛	Nil

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

ALDWYCH. The Dominant Sex. Wed., Sat.
ALHAMBRA. Tulip Time. Wed. & Sat.
APOLLO. Espionage. Wed. & Sat.
CAMBRIDGE. White Cargo. Thurs., Sat.
COLISEUM. "Twenty to One." Wed. & Sat
DRURY LANE. Glamorous Night. W. & S.
DUCHESS. Night Must Fall. Wed., Sat.
GLOBE. "Call It a Day." Thurs. & Sat.
HIPPODROME. Please Teacher! Th. & Sat.
LYRIC. Tovarich. Wed., Thurs.
PHOENIX. A B'fly on the Wheel. Thurs., Sat.
PLAYHOUSE. The Unguarded Hour. Th., S.
QUEEN'S. "Short Story." Wed. & Sat.
ST. JAMES'S. The Two Mrs. Carrolls. W.,S.
SAVOY. The Wind and the Rain. Mon., Sat.
STRAND. 1066 and All That. Tu. & Thurs.
VICTORIA PALACE. Vintage Wine. W. & S.
WESTMINSTER. Timon of Athens. Wed.
WHITEHALL. Anthony and Anna. W. & S.
WYNDHAM'S. Sweet Aloes. Wed. & Sat.

THEATRES

ALDWYCH. 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30. Tem. 6404.
THE DOMINANT SEX.
LONDON'S BEST PLAY. (TWELFTH MONTH).

ALHAMBRA. EVGS., 6.15 & 9. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
TULIP TIME.
THE FUNNIEST PLAY SEEN FOR YEARS.
GEORGE GEE, STEVE GERAY,
JEAN COLIN, SYDNEY FAIRBROTHER, BERNARD CLIFTON.
Prices (including tax) 10/6 to 1/3. Whitehall 2525.

APOLLO. (Ger. 2663).
Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
MARION LORNE & Walter Hackett's Production,
ESPIONAGE.

CAMBRIDGE. TEMple Bar 6056.
SAT., Nov. 16, 8.30. 1st Mat., Thurs., Nov. 21, 2.30.
WHITE CARGO.
Franklin DYALL, Olga LINDO, Horace HODGES.

COLISEUM. Tem. Bar 3161. EVGS., 6.15 & 9.
Wed. & Sat., 2.30. 1st Mat., Sat., Nov. 16.
"TWENTY TO ONE."
The Funniest Musical Sporting Farce ever staged.
10s. 6d., 8s. 9d., 6s., 4s., 3s. 6d., 3s., 1s. 6d., incl. Tax.

COMEDY. EVENINGS at 8.30. Whi. 2578.
Mats., TUESDAY & FRIDAY at 2.30.
HENRY KENDALL & NANCY O'NEIL in
SOMEONE AT THE DOOR.
OVER 185 PERFORMANCES.

DRURY LANE. 8 p.m. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
MARY ELLIS, IVOR NOVELLO in
GLAMOROUS NIGHT,
with LYN HARDING. BARRY JONES.
FINAL PERFORMANCE NOVEMBER 30.

DUCHESS, (Tem. 8243.) Evgs. 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
EMLYN WILLIAMS in his own Play
NIGHT MUST FALL
MAY WHITTY ANGELA BADDELEY

GLOBE, Shaftesbury Avenue. Gerrard 1592.
Evgs., 8.15 sharp. Mats., Thurs. & Sat., 2.30.
FAY COMPTON & OWEN NARES in
"CALL IT A DAY."
By Dodie Smith.

HIPPODROME. Ger. 3272.
Evenings at 8.15. Mats., Thurs. & Sats., 2.30.
BOBBY HOWES in
"PLEASE TEACHER!"
VERA PEARCE. WYLIE WATSON. BERTHA BELMORE.

KINGSWAY. 8.30. Thurs., Sat., 2.30. HOL. 4032.
"RIVALS!" A LIGHT OPERA.
Produced by Vladimir Rosing.
A VERY BRIGHT AND ATTRACTIVE SHOW."
—*Daily Telegraph.*

LYRIC. (Ger. 3686.) 8.30. Mats., Wed., Th., 2.30.
Gilbert Miller presents
TOVARICH.
CEDRIC HARDWICKE, EUGENIE LEONTOVICH.

MERCURY. Notting Hill Gate. 2s.6d. to 6s. Park 1000.
Every Tues., Wed., Fri. & Sat., 8.30. Sat., 2.30.
MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL.
By T. S. Eliot. Robert Speaight as Becket.
Every Thurs. at 9, BALLET. (Sunday for Ballet Club).

PHOENIX. Tem. 8611.
EVGS. at 8.30. Mats., THURS., SAT., 2.30.
A BUTTERFLY ON THE WHEEL.
By E. G. Hemmerde and Francis Neilson.

PLAYHOUSE. Whi. 7774.
EVGS. at 8.30. Mats., THURS., SAT., 2.30.
MALCOLM KEEN, WYNDHAM GOLDIE in
"THE UNGUARDED HOUR."

QUEEN'S, Shaftesbury Avenue. Ger. 4517-8.
Evenings, 8.30. Mats., Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
MARIE TEMPEST, SYBIL THORNDIKE,
A. E. MATTHEWS in
"SHORT STORY."

ST. JAMES'S. (Whitehall 3903).
Evenings, 8.30. Matinees, Wed., Sat., 2.30.
THE TWO MRS. CARROLLS
Leslie Banks, Elena Miramova, Louise Hampton.

SAVOY. Evgs., 8.30. Mon., Sat., 2.30. (Tem. 8888.)
THE WIND AND THE RAIN.
LONDON'S LONGEST RUN. Now in its 3rd Year.
CELIA JOHNSON. ROBERT HARRIS.

STRAND. (Tem. Bar. 2660.). Smoking.
Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Tues. & Thurs., 2.30.
1066 AND ALL THAT. A Revue.
"THIS JOYOUS JOKE."—*Daily Telegraph.*

VICTORIA PALACE. 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
SEYMOUR HICKS in
VINTAGE WINE,
with JULIA NEILSON.

WESTMINSTER, S.W.1. (Vic. 0283). 9d. to 6s.
Tues. at 8.30. Subs., 8.45. First Mat., Wed., at 2.30.
GROUP THEATRE SEASON.
TIMON OF ATHENS.

WHITEHALL. (Whitehall 6692).
EVGS., 8.30. MATS., WED. & SAT., 2.30.
ANTHONY AND ANNA.
A Comedy by ST. JOHN ERVINE.

WYNDHAM'S. Tem. 3028. Evgs., 8.30. W., S., 2.30.
DIANA WYNYARD in
SWEET ALOES, by Jay Mallory.
NOW IN ITS 2ND YEAR.

PICTURE THEATRES

ACADEMY CINEMA, Oxford St. Ger. 2981.
Awarded the Volpi Cup at Venice, 1935,
for the World's Best Screen Performance
PAULA WESSELY (of "Maskerade" fame) in
"EPISODE" (A).

EVERYMAN (Opposite Hampstead Tube Station).
Monday next, Nov. 18th, for Seven Days,
LENI RIEFENSTAHL in
"AVALANCHE" (U),
with MATHIAS WIEMANN.

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LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
MONDAY NEXT, at 8.15.
(The net proceeds of this Concert will be devoted to the Elgar Birthplace Fund).
ELGAR PROGRAMME
PRELUDE, THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS.
SYMPHONIC STUDY, "FALSTAFF."
SYMPHONY No. 2 IN E FLAT.
SIR LANDON RONALD.
Tickets, 10s., 7s. 6d., 6s., 4s., 3s. and 2s.
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ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS by Lawrence Wright. Nov. 18th to Nov. 30th, 10–6.30. Mappin House, 156 Oxford St., W.1.

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